Arifureta Shokugyou de Sekai Saikyou

(ありふれた職業で世界最強)

Arc 06

Chuuni Suki

(厨二好き)

Story Description:

Among the class that was transported to another world, Nagumo Hajime is an ordinary male student who doesn't have ambition nor aspiration in life, called "Incompetent" by his classmates.

The class is summoned to become heroes and save a country from destruction, students of the class are blessed with cheat specs and cool job classes, but that's not the case with Hajime, his job class is a "Synergist" and his stats are very normal (mediocre). "Synergist," to put it in another word is just the artisan class.

Being the weakest, he then falls to the depth of the abyss when he and his classmates are exploring a dungeon. What did he find in the depth of the abyss and can he survive?

Original Story can be found here: Link

Chapter 121: Character Introduction

Apologies, no story this chapter. By popular request.

Incomplete, may be missing characters. Status may be off.

(TN: Also added some extra info from previous chapters, uncertain translations marked with [?])

* * *

Status Plates

==========

Nagumo Hajime (南雲ハジメ)

17 yo Male | Lv ??? > ??? | Transmuter (錬成師) | Adventurer Rank: Gold

Strength 10950 > 12150

Vitality 13190 > 14250

Resist 10670 > 11870

Agility 13450 > 14550

Magic 14780 > 15980

Magic Resist 14780 > 15980

ch 25 > 122

Hero of the series. Originally a gentle, quiet otaku boy, but was labelled incompetant -> bullied -> fell into the abyss -> left arm was eaten -> became OP -> mindset changed: now talks with guns-first. Harem happened (though he treats Yue alone as special). Seeks to conquer the Great Dungeons so he can return home to Japan. (Author Note: stats are temporary, don't worry too much about it)

錬成 Transmutation

[+鉱物系鑑定] + Mineral Appraisal

[+精密錬成] + Precision Transmutation

[+鉱物系探査] + Mineral Enquiry

[+鉱物分離] + Mineral Separation

[+鉱物融合] + Mineral Fusion

[+複製錬成] + Replication Transmutation

[+圧縮錬成] + Compression Transmutation

[+高速錬成] + High-speed Transmutation

[+自動錬成] + Automatic Transmutation

[+イメージ補強力上昇] + Image Reinforcement Power Increase

[+消費魔力減少] + Magic Consumption Reduction

[+鉱物分解] + Mineral Decomposition

魔力操作 Magic Manipulation

[+魔力放射] + Magic Emission

[+魔力圧縮] + Magic Compression

[+遠隔操作] + Remote Control

胃酸強化 Stomach Acid Strengthening (Iron Stomach)

纏雷 Lightning Armor (Lightning Clad)

[+雷耐性] + Lightning Resistance

[+出力増大] + Output Increase

天歩 Sky Walk (Divine Step)

[+空力] + Void Grip (Air Walk/Aerodynamic)

[+縮地] + Shukuchi (Instant Movement/Flicker/Ground Shrink)

[+豪脚] + Grand Legs

[+瞬光] + Lightspeed

風爪 Wind Claw (Air Claw)

[+三爪] + Triple Claws

[+飛爪] + Flying Claws

夜目 Night Vision

遠見 Far Vision

気配感知 Perception

[+特定感知] + Specific Perception

魔力感知 Magic Perception

[+特定感知] + Specific Perception

熱源感知 Heat Perception

[+特定感知] + Specific Perception

気配遮断 Hide Presence (Sign Interception)

[+幻踏] + Phantom Dance (Phantom Step)

毒耐性 Poison Resistance

麻痺耐性 Paralysis Resistance

石化耐性 Petrification Resistance

恐慌耐性 Panic Resistance

全属性耐性 All Elements Resistance

先読 Foresight

金剛 Vajra (Indestructible)

[+部分強化] + Specific Reinforcement

[+集中強化] + Concentrated Reinforcement

[+付与強化] + Grant Reinforcement

豪腕 Grand Arm

威圧 Coercion (Pressure/Intimidation)

念話 Telepathy

追跡 Tracking

高速魔力回復 High-speed Magic Recovery

[+魔素集束] + Mana Focusing

魔力変換 Magic Conversion

[+体力変換] + Vitality Conversion

[+治癒力変換] + Healing Conversion

[+衝撃変換] + Impact Conversion

限界突破 Limit Break (x3 all stats buff)

生成魔法 Creation Magic

重力魔法 Gravity Magic

空間魔法 Space Magic

再生魔法 Regeneration Magic

魂魄魔法 Spirit Magic

言語理解 Language Comprehension

---

* Weapon names (German/German pronounciation):

ドンナー・シュラーク Donner & Schlag ("Thunder & Shock"), (rail)revolvers

シュラーゲン Schlagen ("Knockout"), anti-materiel (rail)rifle

メツェライ Metzelei ("Slaughter"), gatling (rail)gun

オルカン Orkan ("Hurricane"), rocket & missile launcher

ヒュペリオン Hyperion ("Sun God"), laser satellite

フェルニル Ferner ("Further"), airship

* Automatic Transmutation:

Automatically transmutes materials in a magic formation until the magic in the formation is exhausted.

* Mineral Decomposition:

By carefully permeating magic, mineral bonds can be unbound.

It's possible to decompose up to the smallest unit, but is time consuming.

Unusable in combat. Skill used to process sand-like minerals.

* Triple Claws:

Whereas the old bear claw would fire one, this fires three identical wind blades.

* Flying Claws:

Wind blades now fly.

———————————————————————————————————

———————————————————————————————————

Yue

323 yo Female | Sorceress (神子) | Lv 75 > 82 | Adventurer Rank: Gold

Strength	120 > 220
Vitality	300 > 450
Resist	60 > 100
Agility	120 > 220
Magic	6980 > 9180
Magic Resist	7120 > 9320

ch 67 > 122

———————————————————————————————————

Main heroine of the series. Imprisoned in the abyss, was saved by Hajime. Most skilled magic user in this world. Also Hajime's most skilled ero-opponent. For the time being, classed as a Kuudere. Kuudere + bewitching + vampire princess + loli attributes.

———————————————————————————————————

自動再生	Auto Regeneration
[+痛覚操作]	+ Pain Control
[+再生操作]	+ Regeneration Control
全属性適性	All Elements Aptitude

複合魔法	Compound Magic
魔力操作	Magic Manipulation
[+魔力放射]	+ Magic Emission
[+魔力圧縮]	+ Magic Compression
[+遠隔操作]	+ Remote Control
[+効率上昇]	+ Increased Efficiency
[+魔素吸収]	+ Mana Absorption
[+身体強化]	+ Body Strengthening
想像構成	Imagination Composition
[+イメージ補強力上昇]	+ Image Reinforcement Power Up
[+複数同時構成]	+ Multiple Simultaneous Composition
[+遅延発動]	+ Delayed Invocation
血力変換	Blood Conversion
[+身体強化]	+ Body Strengthening
[+魔力変換]	+ Magic Conversion
[+体力変換]	+ Vitality Conversion
[+血盟契 約]	+ Blood Oath Contract
高速魔力回復	High-speed Magic Recovery
生成魔法	Creation Magic
重力魔法	Gravity Magic
空間魔法	Space Magic
再生魔法	Regeneration Magic
魂魄魔法	Spirit Magic

---

* Blood Oath Contract: (ch.67)

Drastic efficiency increase when blood is drained from a contracted

person (ie: Hajime).

* Imagination Composition: (ch.67)

Magic formations can be completed with only a mental image (ie: chantless/formationless magic).

* Regeneration Control:

Can freely control regeneration ability.

Shia Houria

16 yo Female | Diviner (占術師) | Lv 40 > 48 | Adventurer Rank: Gold

Strength	60 > 100
Vitality	80 > 120
Resist	60 > 100
Agility	85 > 130
Magic	3020 > 3800
Magic Resist	3180 > 4000

ch 67 > 122

Heroine. Bunny Girl. Perky, energetic, frivolous. But has recently turned into a splendid person. Demi-humans are unable to use magic, but Shia is able to directly manipulate magic despite that. Has no magical aptitude, but can use body strengthening to a degree that makes her a bugged character. Disappointing beauty + rabbit + desu + naive attributes.

未来視	Future Sight
[+自動発動]	+ Automatic Invocation
[+仮定未来]	+ Future Prediction

[+天啓視]	+ Divine Revelation Sight
魔力操作	Magic Manipulation
[+身体強化]	+ Body Strengthening
[+部分強化]	+ Specific Strengthening
[+変換効率上昇Ⅲ]	+ Conversion Efficiency Up III
[+集中強化]	+ Concentration Strengthening
重力魔法	Gravity Magic
空間魔法	Space Magic
再生魔法	Regeneration Magic
魂魄魔法	Spirit Magic

---

* Weapon names (German/German pronounciation):

ドリュッケン	Drücken ("Press"), sledgehammer + shotgun

* Divine Revelation Sight:

Can glimpse a few seconds ahead into the future. Unlike Future Prediction it doesn't consume magic so it can be continuously active.

* Conversion Efficiency Up III:

Converts magic to physical stats (Str/Vit/Res/Agi) at a

1:3 ratio (ie: 3800 = +11400).

Tio Kurarusu

563 yo Female | Guardian (守護者) | Lv 89 > 93 | Adventurer Rank: Gold

Strength	770 > 880 [+Dragon Form 4620 > 8800]
Vitality	1100 > 1250 [+Dragon Form 6600 > 12500]
Resist	1100 > 1250 [+Dragon Form 6600 > 12500]

Agility 580 > 700 [+Dragon Form 3480 > 7000]

Magic 4590 > 4990

Magic Resist 4220 > 4620

ch 67 > 122

Pervert. Hajime opened a new door for her when he used his Pile Bunker on her weak spot. A prudent, intellectual, mature spirit... or should have been. Heroine. no ja + kimono + watermelons + shapeshifter attributes.

竜化 Dragon Form

[+竜鱗硬化] + Dragonscale Hardening

[+魔力効率上昇] + Magic Efficiency Up

[+身体能力上昇Ⅱ] + Body Ability Up II

[+咆哮] + Roar

[+風纏] + Wind Armor (Wind Clad)

[+痛覚変換Ⅱ] + Pain Control II

魔力操作 Magic Manipulation

[+魔力放射] + Magic Emission

[+魔力圧縮] + Magic Compression

[+遠隔操作] + Remote Control

火属性適性 Fire Element Aptitude

[+魔力消費減少] + Mana Consumption Reduction

[+効果上昇] + Effect Up

[+持続時間上昇] + Duration Up

風属性適性 Wind Element Aptitude

[+魔力消費減少] + Mana Consumption Reduction

[+効果上昇]	+ Effect Up
[+持続時間上昇]	+ Duration Up
[+雷属性]	+ Lightning Element
複合魔法	Compound Magic
再生魔法	Regeneration Magic
魂魄魔法	Spirit Magic

---

* Dragonscale Hardening: (ch.67)

Hardness can be increased by expending magic. Can also increase Dragon Form's base stats and resistances.

* Pain Control II:

High level ability to freely convert pain into energy, increasing all stats. In addition it is possible to store the converted energy. However the energy can only be stored when still feeling lingering pain.

* Lightning Element:

Lightning magic is classified as higher ranked wind magic, this allows lightning magic to be used at the same level as wind magic.

Shirasaki Kaori (白崎香織)

17 yo Female | Healer (治癒師) | Lv 72 > 10

Strength	280 > 1200
Vitality	460 > 1200
Resist	360 > 1200
Agility	380 > 1200
Magic	1380 > 1200
Magic Resist	1380 > 1200

Heroine. An unfortunate, regular schoolgirl that had her love interest, Hajime, stolen from her... or so it seems. Feelings of love for Hajime sprouted during her second year of middle school. Became consciously aware of her feelings after Hajime fell into the abyss. When they reunited, forcibly joined the party when she became aware of Yue stealing Hajime away. Currently possessing the body of the Apostle of God, Nointo. Classmate + airhead + Stand (JoJo reference to her Hannya mask) + pitiable attributes.

回復魔法	Recovery Magic
[+回復効果上昇]	+ Effect Up
[+回復速度上昇]	+ Recovery Speed Up
[+イメージ補強力上昇]	+ Image Reinforcement Power Up
[+浸透看破]	+ Osmosis Penetration [?]
[+範囲回復効果上昇]	+ Effect Range Up
[+遠隔回復効果上昇]	+ Remote Recovery Effect Up
[+状態異常 回復効果上昇]	+ Abnormal Status Recovery Effect Up
[+消費魔力減少]	+ Magic Consuption Down
[+魔力効率上昇]	+ Magic Efficiency Up
[+連続発動]	+ Consecutive Invocation
[+複数同時発動]	+ Multiple Invocation
[+遅延発動]	+ Delayed Invocation
[+付加発動]	+ Addition Invocation
光属性適性	Light Element Aptitude
[+発動速度上昇]	+ Movement Speed Up

[+効果上昇] + Effect Up

[+持続時間上昇] + Duration Up

[+連続発動] + Consecutive Invocation

[+複数同時発動] + Multiple Invocation

[+遅延発動] + Delayed Invocation

高速魔力回復 High-speed Magic Recovery

[+瞑想] + Meditation

再生魔法 Regeneration Magic

魂魄魔法 Spirit Magic

言語理解 Language Comprehension

双大剣術 Greatsword Dual-wielding Proficiency

分解能力 Disintegration Ability (Decomposition Ability)

全属性適性 All Elements Aptitude

複合魔法 Compound Magic

---

* The broken greatswords and wargear were replaced by Hajime.

* Nointo's enchantment, infinite magic supply and pseudo-Limit Break are disabled.

* Original Apostle's stats are all 12000. Kaori doesn't have full control of the body yet.

Amanokawa Kouki *

17 yo Male | Hero (勇者) | Lv 72 > 83

Strength 880 > 1020

Vitality 880 > 1020

Resist	880 > 1020
Agility	880 > 1020
Magic	880 > 1020
Magic Resist	880 > 1020

ch 71 > 122

(*天之河光輝) Hero (lol). A bundle of good and justice. However since he never thinks he's wrong, he has a bad habit of interpreting adverse situations to his own convenience. Kaori, Shizuku and Ryutaro are childhood friends.

全属性適正	All Elements Aptitude
[+光属性効果上昇]	+ Light Element Effect Up
[+発動速度上昇]	+ Movement Speed Up
全属性耐性	All Elements Resistance
[+光属性効果上昇]	+ Light Element Effect Up
物理耐性	Physical Resistance
[+治癒力上昇]	+ Recovery Power Up
[+衝撃緩和]	+ Impact Allevation
複合魔法	Compound Magic
剣術	Sword Proficiency
[+無念無想]	+ Clear Mind
剛力	Herculean Strength
縮地	Shukuchi (Instant Movement/Flicker/Ground Shrink)
[+爆縮地]	+ Explosive Shukuchi
先読	Foresight

高速魔力回復	High-speed Magic Recovery
気配感知	Perception
魔力感知	Magic Perception
限界突破	Limit Break (x3 all stats buff)
[+覇潰]	+ Supreme Destruction (x5 all stats buff)
言語理解	Language Comprehension

Yaegashi Shizuku *

17 yo Female | Swordswoman (剣士) | Lv 72 > 83

Strength	450 > 650
Vitality	560 > 760
Resist	320 > 520
Agility	1110 > 1480
Magic	380 > 580
Magic Resist	380 > 580

ch 71 > 122

(*八重樫雫) I wonder if she's a heroine... Best friend of Kaori. Kouki and Ryutaro's childhood friend. Her home is a kendo dojo. Primary feature of this dignified girl is her ponytail. Has an excellent grasp of human subtleties and relationships, her innate personality won't let her ignore trouble around her giving her a lot of hardships [?]. Recently though she's been depending too much on someone else...

剣術	Sword Skill
[+斬撃速度上昇]	+ Slashing Speed Up

[+抜刀速度上昇] + Drawing Sword Velocity Up

[+無拍子] + Mubyoushi

縮地 Shukuchi (Instant Movement/Flicker/Ground Shrink)

[+爆縮地] + Explosive Shukuchi

[+重縮地] + Heavy Shukuchi [?]

[+震脚] + Seismic Leg

[+無拍子] + Mubyoushi

先読 Foresight

[+投影] + Projection

気配感知 Perception

隠業 Hidden Action

[+幻撃] + Phantom Strike

言語理解 Language Comprehension

Sakagami Ryuutarou * Strength 820 > 980

17 yo Male Vitality 820 > 980

Brawler (拳士) Resist 680 > 790

Lv 72 > 83 Agility 550 > 650

ch 71 > 122 Magic 280 > 350

Magic Resist 280 > 350

(*坂上龍太郎) Muscle brain.

格闘術 Martial Arts

[+身体強化] + Body Strengthening

[+部分強化] + Specific Strengthening

[+集中強化] + Concentrated Strengthening

[+浸透破壊] + Penetration Destruction

縮地 Shukuchi (Instant Movement/Flicker/Ground Shrink)

[+爆縮地] + Explosive Shukuchi

物理耐性 Physical Resistance

[+金剛] + Vajra (Indestructible)

全属性耐性 All Elements Resistance

言語理解 Language Comprehension

Taniguchi Suzu (谷口鈴)

17 yo Female | Barrier Mage (結界師) | Lv 83

Strength	350
Vitality	450
Resist	450
Agility	380
Magic	820
Magic Resist	580

ch 122

Chimikko. Mood maker of the class. Unsung hero of the Hero party. A dirty old man at heart.

結界術適性 Barrier Magic Aptitude

[+魔力効率上昇] + Mana Efficiency Up

[+発動速度上昇] + High-speed Invocation Up

[+遠隔操作] + Remote Control

[+連続発動] + Continuous Activation

光属性適性 Light Element Aptitude

[+障壁適性連動] + Barrier Aptitude Link

言語理解 Language Comprehension

Supporting Characters

==========

- Myu - 4 yo Female - Little girl of the Sea-race. Was saved by Hajime from an underground Führen slave auction. Her father died before she was born, so she comes to love the strong and kind Hajime as her new father. She's so important to him that Hajime made a new oath. She likes ending her sentences in "nano". With the exception of Yue, she is the only person Hajime is completely weak against.
- Remia -24 yo Female - Myu's mother. A gentle beauty. An undine widow whose soothes people with her "ara ara, ufufu". Hajime often cannot tell whether she is serious or joking. Restrains Hajime's party with her mature woman charm.

Classmates

- Hatayama Aiko (畑山愛子) 25 yo Female, Farmer (作農師) - Social Studies teacher. Has a reverse harem of Temple Knights (though her head is full of concern for her students so she doesn't notice).
- Nakamura Eri (中村恵里) 17 yo Female, Necromancer (降霊術師) - Betrayed her classmates to the demons. Used her original darkness magic "Soul Bind" to manipulate countless numbers of dead puppet soldiers. Valuable Bokummusume [?].
- Nagayama Jugo (永山重) 17 yo Male, Heavy Brawler (重格闘家) -

Frontline party leader. Old man face.

- Nomura Kentaro (野村健太郎) 17 yo Male, Earth Mage (土術師) - Nagayama party member. Best friends with Nagayama and Endo. Likes Ayako Tsuji.
- Endo Kosuke (遠藤浩介) 17 yo Male, Assassin (暗殺者) - Nagayama party member. Has an extremely weak presence. Isn't noticed by labyrinth monsters or automatic doors.
- Tsuji Ayako (辻綾子) 17 yo Female, Healer (治癒師) - Nagayama party member. Same class as Kaori, her healing skills are a bit more complex though.
- Yoshino Mao (吉野真央) 17 yo Female, Enchanter (付与術士) - Nagayama party member. Unsung hero of the party.
- Hiyama Daisuke (檜山大介) 17 yo Male, Light Warrior (軽戦士) - Leader of the bullies harassing Hajime. Perpetrator who dropped him into the abyss. Blackmailed by Eri in the beginning, but later killed many of the country's knights and soldiers of his own volition in order to obtain Kaori. He met a gruesome end when Hajime fed him alive to some monsters after finally going to town on him.
- Nakano Shinji (中野信治) 17 yo Male, Water Mage (水術師) - Hiyama gang member.
- Saito Yoshiki (斎藤良樹) 17 yo Male, Wind Mage (風術師) - Hiyama gang member.
- Kondo Reiichi (近藤礼一) 17 yo Male, Spear Warrior (槍術師) - Hiyama gang member. Became prey to Eri's Soul Bind.
- Aikawa Noboru (相川昇) 17 yo Male, - Ai-chan bodyguard member.
- Kawahara Akira (河原明) 17 yo Male, - Ai-chan bodyguard member.
- Tamai Atsushi (玉井淳) 17 yo Male, - Ai-chan bodyguard member.
- Sugawara Taeko (菅原妙子) 17 yo Female, - Ai-chan bodyguard member.
- Miyazaki Nana (宮崎奈々) 17 yo Female, - Ai-chan bodyguard member.
- Sonobe Yuka (園部優香) 17 yo Female, - Ai-chan bodyguard member.
- Shimizu Yukitoshi (清水幸利) 17 yo Male, Dark Mage (闇術師) - Raised an army of monsters to distinguish himself in this new world.

As a result he was left on the verge of death after a demon's suprise attack, after which Hajime terminated him.

Heilig Kingdom

- Elhild = S = B = Heilig King. Killed by Eri during the Imperial City invasion.
- Luluaria = S = B = Heilig Queen. Rarely appears, but assists in the background. Has an equally weak presence like a certain someone [?].
- Randell = S = B = Heilig Prince. 10 yo. Handsome youth with blonde hair and blue eyes. Was infatuated with Kaori, but gave up after meeting Hajime. Currently heartbroken from losing his first love.
- Liliana = S = B = Heilig Princess. 14 yo. Talented and enormously popular within the kingdom. Has been harbouring feelings of love ever since she was saved by Hajime, however his treatment of her hasn't changed so recently she's a rather pitiable character.
- Meld = Loggins Knight team captain. Died by Eri's hands. Most unfortunate death.
- Jose = Rancaid Knight vice-captain of the same team. Likewise killed by Eri.
- Alan = Smith Knight background character, regularly appears [?]. Also dead.
- Kuzeri = Rail New knight team captain. A woman knight originally serving as an Imperial Guard under Liliana.
- Niito = Komorudo New knight team vice-captain. Previously the commander of the third corps.

Adventurer Guild

- Ilwa = Chang Führen branch chief. Awarded Hajime a gold rank and provides him with support. A person who gave Hajime a lot of work (trouble).
- Dot = Clowe Ilwa's head secretary. Like Shizuku, suffers a lot of

hardships.

- Catherine = Former head secretary of the guild master. An old lady that personifies the cruelty of time.
- Loa = Bawabisu Horuado branch chief. Tsundere.
- Barusu = Raputa Guild master. May have spells of destruction [?].

Ankaji Dukedom

- Ranzi = Forward = Zengen Ankaji dukedom's lord. Had a falling out with the church, (漢気溢れる) nice middle [?].
- Bizu = Forward = Zengen Ranzi's son. Attracted to Kaori. Facial expressions at the gunshot level when stared at [?].
- Airi = Forward = Zengen Bizu's sister. At 14 yo, overcame demi-human discrimination when she encountered Myu's cuteness.

Haltina Sea of Trees, Faea Belgaen

- Alferick = Hypist Faea Belgaen elder. Chief of the Forest-race (Elves). Longest lived and easiest to talk with. Zeru of the Tiger-race, Mao of the Winged-race, Rua of the Fox-race, Guze of the Earth-race (Dwarves), Jin of the Bear-race Background character elders. Jin never fully recovered from the blow Hajime delivered to his abdomen.
- Altena = Hypist Granddaughter of Alfrick.
- Regin = Banton Middle-aged man from the Bear-race. Once lead a raid on the Haulia to take revenge for Jin but had the tables turned. Afterwards developed a trauma of the Haulia, pulse rate and breathing would elevate just thinking about it.

Haulia Tribe

- Cam = Haulia Shea's father, Chief of the Haulia tribe of the Rabbit-race. Hyahhaa chief. Chuuni chief. Currently calling himself

"Shadow demon hunter of the writhing abyss, Caamubantisu Erufanraito Rooderia Haulia."

- Baru = "Barudoferudo of Certain Destruction", 11 yo. Proud of his ranged weaponry skill. Infected with chuunibyou.
- Rana = "Ranainferina the Fleeting Shadow." Probably has a job requiring speed.
- Mina = "Minasuteria the Sky Splitter." Probably has an air assassination attack.
- Yao = "Yaozeriasu the Phantom Warrior." Probably uses illusions to manipulate his foes.
- Yoru = "Yorugandaru the Creeping Death." Probably... y'know.
- Riki = "Rikiddobureiku the Light Rain." Something or other.
- Io = "Iorunikusu the Lightning Blade." Something or other.

Hoelscher Empire

- Gahald = D = HoelscherEmperor.
- Bias = D = HoelscherCrown Prince. Ririana's fiance. Beheaded after he raised a ruckus.
- Nediru = Formerly a jailer in the imperial army. Had his nether regions crushed beyond recognition. Master Imperial capital (Adventurer Guild) branch bartender. Tenpure guardian [?].

Demon-race

- Furiido = Baguaa (Freed) Red haired, dark skinned, slightly pointed ear male of the demon-race. Mass-produces powerful demons, possesses space magic from the Age of Gods. His white dragon minions are particularly powerful, they plunged Hajime into a crisis with their Aurora Breath ability during an ambush.

God Faction

- Nointo, Apostle of God = Soldier of God that boasts phenomenal stats. Able to fight more than evenly against Hajime in her Limit Break state. Appears at turning points in history to enact the will of God, either to manipulate the masses or eliminating those who are obstacles to God's plan. Hajime wonders if there are more apostles. Probably.
- Ishtar Rangobarudo = Pope of the Sacred Church. Old man. Lost cause.
- David = Mark Aiko's escort team, temple knight captain. After many troubles, became head of Aiko's reverse harem (although it seems fruitless as Aiko doesn't pay any attention to them).
- Chase = Routine Aiko's escort team, temple knight. Likewise reverse harem member.
- Ehito, Human-race god
- Aruvu, Demon-race god

Other

- Motto = Yunker A true merchant.
- Sohna = Brook town, Masaka inn poster girl. Goes to great lengths to peep at Hajime's love affairs. Her techniques are already far beyond the level of a town girl.
- Christabel = Clothing store monster (drag queen). Former gold-rank adventurer. Possesses strength beyond common sense.
- Mariabelle = Clothing store monster II. Embarked on a new path after Yue's groin smash.
- Fosu Seruo = Owner of the Water Fairy inn at the Lakeshore town, Ur. Serves Japanese-style cuisine.
- Will Kudeta = Third son of the Count Kudeta house. Oedipus complex.
- Riiman = Human-faced fish monster. Can communicate via magic. (漢気溢れる) old man [?]. At first glance seems to be a world-travelling free spirit, but is actually a deadbeat father that neglected his wife and children whilst playing around.

- Uorupen = Stark Heilig kingdom chief supervising transmuter. True craftsman. Will to go beyond his limits in order to learn new techniques.

Liberators

- Oscar = Orcus Master of the Orcus Great Labyrinth (Abyss). In charge of creation magic. This unfortunate man's corpse was planted in a corner of a crop field.
- Miredi = Raisen Master of the Raisen Great Labyrinth (Great Canyon). In charge of gravity magic. Most annoying person in the universe. A unique personality amongst the Liberators.
- Naizu = Guryuuen Master of the Guryuuen Great Labyrinth (Great Volcano). In charge of space magic.
- Meiru = Merujiine Master of the Merujiine Great Labyrinth (Undersea Ruins). In charge of regeneration magic. Sea-race. Contrary to appearances, is rather crude.
- Rausu = Baan Master of the Baan Great Labyrinth (God Mountain). In charge of spirit magic. Bald.
- Shunee = ? (Shune ?) Master of the Shunee Great Labyrinth (Snowfield Ice Cave). In charge of ? magic. Dungeon located in demon-race territory in the south.
- Luluo = Haltina Master of the Haltina Great Labyrinth (Sea of Trees). In charge of ? magic. Dungeon located in demi-human territory in the east.

Chapter 122: Transporting the Demi-humans

This is not meant to be a perfect translation, I cannot read japanese characters and this was carefully edited based on translations I got from my Machine Translator. Therefore, there are bound to be errors here and there! At best, this could be considered as an unedited Final Draft towards an Official Translation

* * *

The wind was roaring and howling, and the ground underneath was quickly flowing backwards.

The Demi-humans that the Empire had released were wondering whether what they're currently experience was really reality or not, to confirm it, they've pinched their cheeks many times to the point of becoming teary eyed. And, they were unsettled as if declaring, I'm not waking up from my dream~, once again, they looked at the unrealistic scene. Although it's sometimes referred as, escaping from reality.

They were currently boarded on a "basket" that Hajime had installed onto the bottom of the "Flying Airship", "Feruniru", and are currently experiencing their first time traveling by air.

Feruniru was as expected, not on the scale of being able to allow thousands of Demi-humans to board, so a large basket was quickly installed. Image-wise, it looked just like an airship gondola.

Actually, the gate hall was set up for Fair Bergen and the Hauria's hidden town, although it was possible to get to the Sea of Tree's instantly after opening a gate, they daringly chose to travel by air for the sake of setting up the stage. That way, there'll be much more impact of the Demi-human's being set free by the Empire.

As it was, there was need for someone to assure the words at the open space from last time, "Releasing the Demi-humans were God's will". The spectacle of a huge flying object turning towards the skies to return home

was required to completely fool the Empire citizens.

but, as the price, Hajime who started up Feruniru was faced with a harsh burden from having so much people loaded on. While gushing out red magical power on the bench seat in the bridge, laying on his back with his legs stretched out languidly was not the embodiment of arrogance.

As expected, to pilot the ship with thousands of people boarded on, their accumulated weight which forced his magic consumption to drain out was definitely not half-assed.

However, while his magical powers were gradually drained away, with the current situation he decided to train his magical ability to efficiently operate magical power through his consciousness with much effort, however the cause of his languidity was likely not just due to the magic consumption though.

To others it would just look like someone was being lazy but, it was actually a person's effort to train whenever possible. It was really hard to tell the difference……

Yue, Shia, and Kaori were attending and beside Hajime. Though Hajime's appearance was that of a father becoming lazy while sitting on a bench as his child plays at the park on a holiday, at his right arm was Yue, on his left was Shia using it as a pillow, and Kaori who was fiddling with his hair from the back of the seat.

He was really training seriously but……there would be no rebuttals that the scene looked just like a guy with his Harem.

[Oi oi, that's quite the attitude while in front of the Emperor, eh?]

[……Nagumo-kun, although I'm only saying it…..I think you should respect yourself a bit more?]

[How enviou……I mean. Right. it's indecent]

Though he was concentrating on training to operate his magical powers efficiently, unconsciously Yue and Shia were patting his head as the voices multiplied towards Hajime.

In order to swear the oath in front of Fair Bergen's elders, Gaharudo, the Emperor of the Hoelscher Empire accompanied them, Ririana accompanied them as a member of the royal family of the same human beings to witness the oath as a princess of the Hairhi Kingdom, and the usual Shizuku. Of course, Kouki, Ryutaro, and Suzu was also there.

And another person as well, Teio who was asked by Gaharudo to show him around on the airship was also there but, when she returned and saw Yue and them, [Mistress as well~], she declared to Hajime and began carrying out the ruOndaibu *It's a reference which I can't make out, とハジメにルoンダイブを決行し*, sensing what was about to happen Hajime used his legs to strangle her and without a problem she dropped to the ground. Although her eye whites were showing and she was slightly convulsing, there were no problems.

[Ah~, did you finish exploring the warship?]

[Yeah, it's quite ridiculous. I have absolutely no idea how this mass of metal is able to fly. But, its extremely interesting! Oi, Hajime Nagumo. Prepare an aircraft for us. I'll pay whatever you ask for]

Gaharudo sat on the bench and faced towards him, his eyes were shining star-like in curiosity at Hajime. Shizuku and them also sat on the seats.

By the way, Shizuku and Ririana were sitting right next to hajime. Though Gaharudo was a bit unpleased, but his eyes were shining like a little boy and he didn't care much about it. He seems to have greatly liked this airship.

[I have no need for stuff like money. Give it up. This is going to be the only time you're getting on board. Do your best to enjoy the time you have right now]

[Don't say that. Na? Just one, even a small plane is fine]

[There's no merit in it for me though]

[Nugu~u, if money is no good then how about women! One of my daughters was finally becoming just the right age. Though she has quite

a lot of pride, her beauty is top-tier. I'll add her into your harem so, na? It'll be nice right?]

It appears that Gaharudo thought Hajime was an unparalleled playboy. It was sad that situationally it was something that couldn't be denied.

However, it would be troublesome to suddenly be handed a woman so Hajime was about to reject while laughing but, the females reacted quicker than him.

[[[[[No(desu*Shia*)(ja*Teio*)!!]]]]]

[……And there you have it]

[Chi, you're just showing off…..n? Princess Ririana, just now, didn't you also react?]

Gaharudo sulked and clicked his tongue and turned his line of sight towards Ririana and noticed. Allured by that, the others also turn towards Ririana.

[Eh? N, no way. Are you sure you weren't mistaken?]

[……Kukuku. Come to think of it, at the party, you were having much more fun dancing with Hajime Nagumo than with Bias. Oi oi, Hajime Nagumo. Aren't you moving along too quickly? Even I'm amazed at your speed]

[*She actually repeats Nya, but english-wise it doesn't make sense like it did with Hajime's name in the chapter 120 lol*Whawhawhawhat are you talking about! Me and Nagumo-san absolutely don't have that kind of relationship! R, right? Ne? Nagumo-san!]

[Ah? Ah~, it's as impossible as the heavens overturning itself]

[……You didn't have to take it that far……]

Towards Hajime clear objection, the riled up and increasing tension that Ririana had was immediately cut down. She looked away at something sulkingly. From that attitude, Ririana understood that she had no chance……

Or rather, in her heart she was looking back towards the dance from

the party. Hajime should have been thinking about it too but, to completely put down the person in question on the spot, glances of sympathy was looked at Ririana, then towards Hajime.

[……Why do I have to be looked at with those kinds of eyes. In the first place, the princess is something like a married woman. Although her fiance was beheaded, that doesn't mean that her marriage with the royal family was lost. That's why, eventually she'll be paired up with another royalty right?]

[Ah~, about that…..]

On behalf of Ririana who had the expression of having chewed hundreds of bitter insects and worms, Gaharudo answered.

[Being completely honest, my clan is currently not in the position for that kind of thing. After all, we have to wear these necklaces throughout our entire lives or else we'll die, we've got to deal with the many ridiculous situations that arose]

Just like Garuda had said, a necklace with a red gem was definitely on his neck.

[From the contents of that oath, even if someone else other than the royalty disobeys the contract, the royal family will "judge accordingly by the law" to the best we can, our lives are connected now, as it is, it doesn't change the fact that the lives of the public have also been grasped. A radical reform of punishment needs to be created in order to enforce the laws, and all the other towns besides the Empire needs to know of the law as well……everyone here and there are desperate right now]

As Gaharudo leaned back deeply into the backrest of the seat, he scratched his head as if saying, [I'm lost!].

[Now that I don't know when we'll be dying, I can't afford to have the princess of another kingdom marry in, there's absolutely no other choice. moreover, we've lost manpower because of the emancipation of the Demi-humans. There's people fussing about everywhere. We also need manpower in correspondence towards suppressing the public, honestly, it's a situation where the Empire actually wants to ask (. . . . .) for the

Kingdom's support instead]

[I see. In other words you're taking back the marriage proposed to the princess?]

[Ma~a, that's about it. We need to calm down the situation and confirm the safety of the royal family first, then once that happens, this time, it would be a better idea for his highness Randell……or rather Majesty now…. to marry with a princess instead]

Towards Gaharudo's explanation, everyone present gave off a, [Heh~] expression.

By the way, actually, one of the royalty screamed out, [As if there's any truth to that foolish talk! I'll be removing this necklace!], and they really removed their necklace, afterwards, they suddenly turned mad and rampaged around, and as if their threads were cut, they died on the spot, this was the reason why the royalty began to work desperately.

[Isn't that great then! Riri!]

[It really is. Freedom to love…..might actually still be impossible but, for the time being, you've gained time]

[Un un. I'm glad for you, Riri]

With Kouki first, the members glanced at Ririana with a gentle gaze. Ririana showed a bitter smile towards her friends who were glancing at her, pleased without reserve that the "marriage had been cleared up". Oddly enough, Gaharudo also showed a wry smile.

[With that, Hajime Nagumo. Right now princess Ririana is currently free*english accent*? If you want, the Empire will cooperate with you with all it's might]

[Na~!? Your Majesty! What are you saying! I, I'm not……]

Gaharudo was grinning from ear to ear as he said it. Once again Ririana was riled up.

However, Hajime was taking the contents of the talk lightly and turned an amazed expression towards Gaharudo. He had enough of Ririana's

current attitude.

[Then, I'll have to give you an airship in return? No matter how you look at it there are no merits.....rather, isn't it a demerit?]

[Just what are you implying!? Nagumo-san!]

[Oi oi, she's the princess of a country? Normally, it's a place that men can't even reach]

[Wait a second, did you two hear what I just said? Are you guys listening to me!]

[Don't group me with you. I have no hobbies to collect women. Princess is only a title, rather it'll only cause troubles]

[Hai-hai-hai, you guys definitely didn't listen. No one here listened to me. .....~Gusu~.....what exactly is a princess I wonder.....]

[Riri.....it's alright.....U~u, you're a princess so don't worry]

[Ri, Riri! I heard you properly, so! Show some spirit!]

Ririana was completely through with Hajime and Gaharudo's discussion, Ririana finally began writing characters on her seat in a negligent manner. At the edge of her eye, something was gathering and sparkling. Then Shizuku and Kouki were desperately trying to cheer her up.

Disregarding Ririana and them, Hajime was currently groaning, [Unununu], and Gaharudo who was trying to negotiate with him let out a sigh.

[I have nothing I want right now, just give it up. Eventually, just maybe, you'll find something worth negotiating over.....so just wait patiently until that time]

[Nu~uuu, you really have nothing that you want? Anything you want done? Just honestly say it out. Humans always have wants. It's always been decided that someone who says that they don't want anything are either no longer human or just scheming something behind the scenes. .....Ah~, that's right, you were a monster]

[You trying to pick a fight? .....Ma~a, I can understand what you mean. But.....]

As Hajime was saying that, he jerked and embraced both Yue and Shia.

[What I really want is already in my arms. “Having them with me at all times” is already enough to fill my entire head, I can’t think of anything “more” than that. Probably for life]

That’s why-, Hajime expressed that negotiations were useless. Yue was so happy she brought her body closer, Shia’s eyes were opened wide to have also been forcefully held like Yue, in the next moment her Usamimi and bunny tail began wagging back and forth and she threw her arms around Hajime.

On Hajime’s chest, Yue’s and Shia’s eyes met, both of them both laughed, [Kufufu], and smiled at one another.

[Ah~, ah~, I get it, I get it. Chi, it’s way too sweet for my mouth to handle. I guess I’ll go and enjoy the scenery on the deck.....]

Gaharudo got up with an annoyed look and quickly left the bridge. Hajime was smiling wryly. After seeing the face-to-face discussion, Kouki and Ryutaro didn’t know what to do and let their eyes wander around. Suzu let out an odd voice, [Howa~].

And a voice came out from behind Hajime and his legs.

[Uu~, it’s unfair that it’s only Yue and Shia! Ne, ne~e, Hajime-kun. “In my arms” is a metaphorical expression right? It’s not only limited to Yue and Shia right? Ne?]

[Ma, master. Although I got to experience your wonderful foot technique, will you not hold mistress closely either? “In my arms” would be nice.....]

Kaori clung onto Hajime from behind, she was desperately trying to appeal for her existence. Teio sat up and pleaded to Hajime with her chin on his knee.

The person who reacted to the two was Yue.

While getting up a little, she glanced towards Kaori and Teio.

[……How unfortunate]

[Wha, what do you mean!?]

[Mu~u, I can't ignore that just now, Yue!]

Kaori and Teio had an atmosphere as if they were chewing onto a handkerchief while letting out [Ki~iii!], as they looked at Yue who was expressionless. Yue inclined her neck as if she was thinking about something, then she slowly pointed at herself and Shia.

Then,

[……Winner]

Following that, she pointed at Kaori and Teio.

[……Loser]

And as expected, it was said with her expressionless face. Then as it was she snuggled her cheek against Hajime's chest. Then at that moment, a sound of something being cut "~Buchi~" could be heard within the bridge.

[Fu, fufufu….Yue's pretty weird right? suddenly saying things that don't make sense….she's surely broken somewhere?]

[That's right. That must be true. Then mistresses must fix it]

[Speaking of fixing, there's a simple way of doing it]

[Umu umu, broken things will…..]

[[Be fixed if hit! (No-ja!*Teio*)]]

They suddenly both stood up and overlooked down on Yue while smiling.

Extremely tensed*Doki as in the effect doki doki*? Fighting spirit*Toki*? -like began to overflow. From that pressure, Kouki, Ryutaro, and Suzu huddled together to brace themselves. Kouki began to whisper in a mutter, [Is, is that Kaori?].

Yue who was hit by both of their pressures, once again, smiled slightly which ruined her expressionless face and looked up.

[.....Stop it. If we seriously went at it, both of you have no chances of beating me]

Are you CodiOta*Unsure about what this reference is, コーディoーター* they wanted to tsukkomi her lines. And that was quite the intense provocation.

[[Just what we wanted! (Ja!)]]

Sure enough it caused Kaori and Teio to heat up even more. Yue also slowly got up.

[Wa, the three of you wait a second! To suddenly start fighting.....or rather, Nagumo-kun*lol whoops i didn't notice i had kun and san mixed up here, thanks gimme_breack and maniac88*! Stop them!]

Shizuku was sweatingly and flustered around trying to do her best to arbitrate the situation. And quickly came to the conclusion that she wouldn't be able to stop them herself! So she gave up and turned to ask for help from Hajime who was the cause of this dispute.

Hajime just casually said.....

[It's impossible. I'm sluggish.....]

His magical power was already drastically decreased and he became sluggish. He didn't seem to have any intentions of moving.

To begin with, a small quarrel was an everyday occurrence, rather it was more like a kind of communication for the girls, so Hajime didn't pay much heed to it.

[P, people like you are~]

However, Shizuku was still oblivious towards her surroundings then, a cheek began to twitch.

Then, a hanya-voice called out to Shizuku.

[Shizuku-chan! Please take that back!]

[Ar~e? Since when did I get pulled into this!?]

Quite naturally, Shizuku's participation in the war was decided.

[Sa~a, princess, let's both step up together! You're an barrier expert right? I'll leave defences to you and Suzu over there!]

[Eh? Me as well!? Why!?]

[Suzu was also casually included!?]

Teio with her draconic strength held Suzu and Ririana's necks like a kitten and dragged them. [Princess.....I'm a princess.....], Ririana muttered out with empty feelings.

[.....Shia, I'm entrusting you as the Vanguard]

[A, alright! I won't let anyone get near Yue-san!]

Full of spirit. It seemed that Shia served as Yue's vanguard. She got up from Hajime and started twirling her arm around.

[.....Hajime, wait for a bit. I'm going to beat them and come back]

[O~h, do it in moderation~]

[.....After we're done fighting we'll embrace again]

[Anytime is fine~]

[.....N~]

With that, the female members (except for some) left towards the deck with the atmosphere filled with fighting spirit. Although the deck was a moderate size it couldn't be said to have actually been enough. Surely It'll likely be good battle training. It's necessary for Kaori to get used to Nointo's body so moving around is a good idea. Since there's no telling what kind of ordeals they'll be facing at the great labyrinth, [Harutsuina Sea of Trees], it's good to train even if only a bit.

However it was unknown whether Yue and them had that in mind though.

After a while, roars and explosions were beginning to be heard. Kouki and them were startled. They had anxious expressions, wondering if it

was really alright to just leave them as is.

[They're having fun huh~]

However, Hajime's impression was just that.

[……Or rather what's with you, Nagumo…..]

[As expected, you're quite outrageous….]

The bridge that was only filled with men now, after looking at the bored Hajime, Kouki and Ryutaro were half amazed and half concerned. He wasn't phased at all with that riot that the women started, it seemed to have been completely natural so they were impressed as men.

After that, Yue and their fight ended after terribly scaring the Demi-humans, and finally the Sea of Trees were beginning to appear up ahead. Although it sounded as if the first to scream out was the emperor…….it must have surely just been their imaginations.

While quietly worrying for the emperor's safety, they began to prepare and land at the Sea of Trees.

~~~~~~

With the sun hiding its face, the curtain of night fell down.

The interior of the Sea of Trees was illuminated by Fair Bergen as people produced orange lights. Normally, no matter how busy they are with reconstruction, the time for pleasures of family meals and family time would be long past, and the serene silence would be flowing in the air.

However, the current Fair Bergen was as if the night and day cycle were reversed, it was wrapped up in clamor. People were busily running to the right and left. People started gathering in the village outside of Fair Bergen, it appears that people were arranging the soldiers and instructing them.

Towards that clamor, while looking out the window that was left open to let in the evening wind, one of Fair Bergen's elders, Alfrerick Hapisuto of the forest people had a slightly indescribable expression while holding
~~~~~~

a document in one hand.

In the contents, was a report about accepting in several thousands of their brethren back, it was that kind of document. The other elders were also helping out to split the work.

[Fu~u....Cam. Is our brethren truly coming back?]

[.....You're still saying that kind of thing. I'm not going to keep reassuring you every time you ask, just hurry up and finish preparing to accept them]

When Alfrerick began talking, as if the room was alive a person's presence appeared. Beside Alfrerick was the Haruia, Cam, who had concealed his presence.

Cam and the Hauria tribe came back through the gate ahead of Hajime and them to tell of the Demi-humans being liberated. And used the telepathy stones to increase efficiency of the preparations to accept in their people, that was their roles as volunteers.

[I know that. It's just that, it's still just to hard to believe. That Empire is really liberating our brethren.....]

[That'll be proven in a few hours from now. Ma~a, I can understand your feelings. .....For us, if it wasn't for boss, never in our dreams did we think something of this scale could be done]

[Boss.....the qualified person---Nagumo Hajime, huh. If that story is true then, he is not just my granddaughter's but all of our brethren's savior. We'll have to think of a way to repay him.....]

[Boss probably doesn't expect any of those kinds of things. Rather than that, quickly move that hand of yours. The reports are stacking up again]

Cam who heard a report from the telepathy stone, glanced towards Alfrerick for an instant. Although something was said to Cam through the telepathy stone, he only looked out into space, his appearance had no openings at all either. On the contrary, intense drive appeared from his lack of presence.

They once had an expression of resignation towards their expectation of their clan being executed……you'd never think they were the same person. Their original gentle atmosphere was also nonexistent now, instead they had a sharpness that seemed that it would cut anyone who just touches them.

In fact, that sharpness had already been shown.

That was because as soon as Cam came to the elders and told them to prepare to accept in the slaves which will be liberated, no one, not even Alfrerick could believe his words but, on that occasion, one of the elders felt that Cam's behavior was irreverently and unpleasant, so they started throwing out words in contempt at Cam and even tried to get him to kneel down forcefully.

Even if they've avenged the Kumaninzoku before and helped out when Fair Bergen was attacked by the demons and empire, the values that the Usagininzoku were seen in where likely not able to change so quickly.

However, towards that action due to fixed values, he returned it with severe murderous intent. The moment that one of the elder's subordinates tried to touch Cam, just where were they hidden, simultaneously the Hauria tribe appeared and placed their blades on all of the elder's necks.

Naturally, the man who was about to confront cam also had a blade pointed at him, it turned into a situation where no one moved a muscle. Filled with murderous intent, if you spoke poorly, there's no doubt that they'll bear their fangs, Alfrerick was somehow able to resettle peace in that situation.

In an instant, they occupied Fair Bergen's elder meeting who carried the highest power, and, made them all breakout into cold sweat with their fierce murderous intent, for the time being they decided to trust them and see what happens. Or rather, they couldn't do anything but that. The Hauria's blades which were on the scruff of their necks were dangerous.

[Oji-sama*Grandfather*, preparation for the meals are complete. This is the quantity left after consumption]

A lovely voice just like a bell ranged out and pulled Alfrerick out of his

recollection which made him break out in cold sweat.

[Mu, Arutena huh. Thanks for the hard work. But, you keep going back and forth*unsure, お前も帰って来てまだ間がないのだ*, don't stress yourself out]

[I'm just fine. My brethren are coming back, I can't just sit and do nothing]

Arutena took on a resolute attitude as Alfrerick was worrying. However, after passing on the report to Alfrerick, strangely she began to fidget restlessly. Though Alfrerick was dubious, he noticed that his granddaughter was frequently glancing towards Cam, and somehow guessed what she had in mind.

[If you're anxious about him, how about hearing about it from Cam?]

[! N, no, I wasn't particularly thinking about Nagumo-san……]

[However, I never said anything about a man did I?]

[Oji-sama! No way, please don't find faults in others words like a meanie!]

Alfrerick was visibly pleased while watching his granddaughter who was restless, he may have been serious about it?-she thought.

Due to Arutena's personality and figure, there have been many marriage proposals since her birth but, up until now she's rejected them all, the person in question wanted to follow in her grandfather's footsteps and work for the country rather than thinking about marriage. That's why he had never had this kind of discussion until now.....

From within Alfrerick, his foolishness and teasing as a grandfather started to rise up.

[Fumu, that man is definitely your benefactor but, he doesn't think of you as special? Or rather, to be specific he was helping out the Hauria tribe? Although you shouldn't think too much into it.....it'll be difficult to get him to become your partner]

[I've already said it~, it's not like that! Mou~! I heard that Nagumo-

sama was bringing back our brethren, so I was only a bit interested about it. Yes, that's the only reason!]

With a puffed out face, Arutena started to leave the room and Alfrerick secretly let out a sigh.

Then, at that time, Cam who was quiet until then, unexpectedly called out to Arutena.

[Miss Arutena]

[Eh, ehtto, yes? Cam-san. What is it?]

Cam had a smile as if he was amused at something which made Arutena reply back wryly. Cam reported smiling as he saw Arutena who was cautious.

[Although it seems as if boss allows many women to serve him, the fact is, he's fairly single-minded. And, the "special" positions have already been covered, as so, it's immovable. It's possible to get closer towards those seats but, you'd likely need a substantial amount of trust for that]

[Wa, ha~a.....Ehtto]

Cam was fearlessly grinning at the puzzled Arutena.

[By the way, according to boss's actions, the closest person towards that seat is.....my daughter Shia. After all, the reason why he helped us bear our fangs at the Empire was because, "For the sake of Shia's smile to not become clouded" he said]

[! Is, is that so?]

[That's right. If it was for Shia's sake, Boss would take on a country's army. Right, all for Shia's sake. Fufufu]

[!]

Arutena sensitively guess that he was basically implying, [You can't win against my daughter!].

Actually, Arutena was the same age of Shia who was 16 years old. Therefore, having been compared with another girl of her age and told

that she wouldn't even be a proper match..... there was no helping that she was angry.

[When you say Shia-san.....you're talking about the one with the pale bluish hair right. Allow me to say that I don't think I'm inferior to her. Though there is definitely a difference in the amount of time spent together.....even I would, with the same amount of time given to me.....]

[*light hearted no's*Iya, iya, our Shia is an extremely special existence, as expected, miss Arutena should stop from doing such useless things for your own sake, allow me to give you some advice. If you miss the marriageable age it'll become a very bleak thing]

[That's uncalled for!]

[Ha~a. Cam, would you leave the teasing of my granddaughter at that.....]

The huffing mad Arutena and the grinning Cam. Alfrerick let out a grand sigh as he looked at the two.

The reason why Cam was provoking Arutena was because he was a bit meddlesome.

Of course, he was not going against Arutena, he was going against Shia. The relationship of Shia and Hajime when they left the Sea of Trees could be said that Shia was rushing it. That is, as long as you're looking at appearances only, Cam had felt that their relationship had become quite intimate. After one push, make sure to rush straight beyond the goal!

That one push, in other words it was a detonator for Arutena to start scheming, If Shia had heard it, [That's extremely uncalled for!] she'd say in anger.

Cam chuckled to himself as he had lit up Arutena's feelings of rivalry. The appearance of a girl whos decided to love without hesitation and resort to anything was.....incredibly devilish.

Then, at that time, all of the sudden the outside became noisy. It wasn't the same noise from running around like before, it was the noisiness of tension from an unexpected situation. They even began to hear roars.

[What's going on!]

Alfrerick suddenly stood up from his seat and walked up to the window. Then he saw the cause of the commotion.

[Pillars....of....light?]

Exactly according to those words, light as strong as the sunlight during daytime was shining down onto the trees, no, the light was incomparably strong, that, rather than just the trees it lit up past them and lit up the plaza of Fair Bergen.

The situation was currently unknown, Alfrerick had his eyes wide opened and a calm voice resounded.

[Don't worry, Alfrerick. Boss has arrived]

Right, the identity of the light which illuminated Fair Bergens plaza, was the searchlight of the airship "Feruniru" which has arrived in the skies of Fair Bergen.

Chapter 123: Night of Fair Bergen

This is not meant to be a perfect translation, I cannot read japanese characters and this was carefully edited based on translations I got from my Machine Translator. Therefore, there are bound to be errors here and there! At best, this could be considered as an unedited Final Draft towards an Official Translation

* * *

An intense light poured down over Fair Bergen just like a barrier.

Demi-humans were running away in different directions when the plaza was lit up by the pillar of light, they were all watching from afar with nervous expressions of what's to come.

Similarly, soldiers surrounded the plaza while having an expression cramped with fear.

Bekibeki~, Baki~, Beki~!! *Sound of branches breaking*

Immediately afterwards, a scream-like sound was emitted by the tree's overhead as they broke. [Goodness gracious, has a new monster appeared!], as Fair Bergen's residents took a forward stance, it appeared.

What they saw first was a huge mass of metal. Gradually lowering it's altitude and finally the residents of Fair Bergen noticed that it was a gondola. Afterwards, the appearance of a devilfish-like airship "Feruniru" was seen. The ground was illuminated by the two powerful searchlights which were attached to the bottom of its front and back in order to look for a safe place to land.

The surrounding people could do nothing but simply open their eyes and mouths widely in astonishment, Feruniru slowly lowered the gondola to the ground and purges it, then it landed beside the gondola.

The plaza was completely filled up with the gondola and Feruniru and the surrounding people took distance from it in a panic. At the same time, they had a, what's going to happen now, face filled with unease as they looked.

Then, at that time, the front and back of the rectangular shaped gondola suddenly opened up. The Demi-humans were startled. The soldier's hands which held their weapons were drenched in sweat and, ~Gokuri~, the sound of their throats could be heard. Their expressions stiffened up when they thought about what might jump out of the gondola which was wrapped in darkness.

Among the residence's gazes, what appeared from the atmosphere timidly was……an Usagininzoku girl. With that, the residents expressions turned into bewilderment. In that situation where the residents couldn't process and understand yet, Demi-humans appeared one after another from the darkness.

Those who came out from the gondola in succession, all equally looked around their surroundings with a slightly unbelieveable expression. In the serene silence of the cool air, vigorously, along with the security they felt while surrounded by trees, the nostalgic lights of Fair Bergen, and the sight of their brethren who they believed they'd never see again.

Although they were still in a stunned state like vegetation absorbing water, they were gradually realising. "We've finally returned to our hometown" is what they said.

Fair Bergen's residents were also the same as well.

A woman hesitatingly advanced ahead slowly. It was a middle-aged woman who had dropped down inumimis. She had tears accumulating in the corners of her eyes and gently called out the name which she thought was lost.

[…..Zack, are you Zack?]

The one who reacted to that voice was a boy who similarly had dropped down inumimis. It was that boy which Kouki had worried about at the Empire. Once the boy caught the appearance of the woman, his face crumpled up into tears and started running out.

[Ka-san!*Mom*]

[Zack!]

As the woman knelt down and expanded out her arms, the boy leaped into her chest. The woman who was called, mother, was tightly embracing her son within her arms to confirm that it wasn't a fantasy. And the parent and child had tears flowing out of delight from their miraculous reunion.

During the period of the parent and child's reunion, the Demi-humans and residents realized that they've returned and shouted out in joy which shook the ground as they ran towards each other, family and friends were releasing a powerfully bright voice every time they met up with acquaintances and lovers who were safe.

Fair Bergen was wrapped up in great joy, the usual quiet tranquility suddenly disappeared and a festival-like racket began.

Inside of the clamor of Demi-humans which was filled with overflowing smiles, Alfrerick as well as the other elders came running up to Hajime and them who got off Feruniru.

[Boy.....you had a completely unexpected appearance]

[N? Ahh, Alfrerick huh. Ma~a, there were various bothersome things so overlook it for me]

When Alfrerick looked overhead at the trees which folded and broke, he showed a wry smile as he talked, Hajime was scratching his cheek and had a slightly embarrassed expression.

From the skies of the Sea of Trees, the idea to descend down onto and crushing the trees without question just to enter from the outside of the Sea of Trees because using a gate to transfer everyone was too troublesome was due to careless judgement from his magical power being reduced to almost nothing.

However, because Hajime had been impressed by Fair Bergen's beautiful scenery, as expected there's was a slight feeling of having done something bad.

[Sorry, Yue. Can I rely on you?]

[N.....leave it to me]

When Hajime called out to Yue by his side, Yue's lips loosened into a wry smile and she extended out her right arm overhead.

["Absolute Imitation"] *That's what I'm calling it, 絶象*

Reproduction magic "Absolute Imitation". It's a magic which restores all destruction regardless of whether it was organic or inorganic matter.

The moment Yue activated the magic, the tree's overhead immediately regained their former appearances. The elders exposed absentminded expressions towards the irrational magic which they witnessed. Only Alfrerick was able to guess that it was due to obtaining new Age of Gods magic and he massaged his forehead wrinkles like he was tired.

[Oji-sama, although I sympathize with your feelings, it's about time we should.....]

[Mu, that's right. Boy.....no, Nagumo-dono. I've roughly heard of the circumstances from Cam. Though it was unbelievably sudden, it appears that my brethren have really been released. we've likely just experienced a historical moment right now. First of all, as Fair Bergen's representative, I thank you]

[That's what you say but, the ones who did everything was the Hauria tribe. Please don't make mistakes here?]

Hajime gave a warning towards Alfrerick's words as he was indifferently putting the gondola and Feruniru back away into the "Treasure Warehouse". Suddenly the enormous objects from the plaza disappeared and the people who were expressing their joys began blinking their eyes. Then they paid attention towards Hajime and them who were facing the Elders.

[Ahh, of course. To begin with if the Haruia tribe wasn't here, Fair Bergen may have been completely obliterated from the previous attack. Considering that as well, there's nothing else to believe. Fufu~, never in my long life.....did I ever expect that it would be the weakest and banished Haruia tribe that would have defeated the Empire]

The Hauria tribe challenged the Empire to a fight and came out

victorious and they even rescued all the brethren----that fact having been stated from Alfrerick's mouth made the residents realise who the people that allowed them to reunite with their important people were.

They turned their attention to Cam who was standing next to Alfrerick with a straightened back. What dwelled in their eyes was not contempt at the weakest race but, great awe and respect of looking at a hero.

When Cam notices those glances, as if he had thought of something a mischievous smile appeared on his lips and he slowly raised his right hand. And as if saying, [Come over here!], he bent his fingertips. It was a hand signal which they used when they invaded the castle.

In that instant, it seemed like someone would instinctively tsukkomi, [*light hearted no's* Iya, Iya, where were you guys hiding!], the other Hauria tribesmen suddenly appeared around Cam! And they all took an "At ease" stance while lined up without moving at all as they awaited their command.

Cam had a satisfied smile as he looked at his tribesmen who stood in a line, his eyes were sharp like a blade and filled with drive which was enough to make people back away unconsciously, all of the residents------ to be exact it was the Usagininzoku who he raised his voice towards.

[My brethren. People of the Sea of Trees who have suffered humiliation and resignation over the long time. Listen. Though we've managed to overcome the Empire this time, eternal peace is impossible. All of your futures will definitely be threatened once again, not too long from now]

The hundreds of Usagininzoku that were at the plaza trembled in fear towards those words. Will the painful days of the Empire come once again? they're eyes clinged onto Cam who was making a speech.

[Once that happens, you guys will once again experience days like yesterday. No, not only that. This time, even comrades who have escaped being slaves will also suffer the same fate]

Although they were safe now, the dark future was pointed out, not only the Usagininzoku but also the other Demi-humans were looking down.

[Are you guys fine with that?]

There's no way it's fine. We never want to return to those days where our dignity was trampled on. Let alone, allowing our precious people to experience those pains as well.

But, even if you say that, what should we do……

Cam was glancing sternly at his brethren who were looking down, and as if the answer was right before their eyes, he further increased his voice.

[There's no way that's fine right? Then, what should we do. It's simple. If you want to protect those who are important to you right now…..fight. If you don't wish to live while being exploited in resignation then…..stand up for yourselves. If you wish to change the Usagininzoku's circumstances then……fill your heart with hatred! Just like how we of the Hauria Tribe did! The Usagininzoku was never the weakest to begin with! As long as you have determination, then you can become stronger than any other race! We've already proven that!]

Some leaked an, [Ah…..]. They realised that those who broke through the huge enemy and rescued them were not a special existence but the same Usagininzoku that they were. One of the Usagininzoku that was looking down rose their face up once again.

[Remember the humiliation that you received at the Empire. Do not contempt yourselves that it was due to unfortunate circumstances. Continue protecting your important people with your own hands. If you have the time to indulge yourself in resignation then take up your weapons! We'll teach you how to fight. If you seek power, if you've decided to fight then, you should come and join us. The Hauria tribe will always welcome you guys at any time!!]

After Cam finished ending his speech, he gave out a hand signal once again. Then, the Hauria tribesmen as if they were ninjas spread out and disappeared in an instant!

Once they saw that, Cam confirmed that the fires were lit up within the Usagininzoku's eyes and he chuckled to himself. [It looks like our military

power's increased once again! I'll make sure to not miss the chance to remodel their minds immediately once they first participate in the training!] he thought.

[Boss, I'm sorry to have side tracked. It was just too good a time to secure talented people]

[Ahh, I don't particularly mind. ……So even you've become able to speak like that~. With that, how about uniting all the Usagininzoku with the Hauria?]

[Hahaha, if it comes to that then we'll become quite fearsome!]

[……Recently, father's demeanor has become more and more like Hajime-san's. I feel that the "Gentle Usagininzoku" will become exterminated not too long from now]

Shia was looking far into the distance with a dry smile. It appears that it's only a matter of time before all Usagininzoku's become brainwashed.

By the way, Gaharudo was also there. Right before his eyes, the Hauria tribe which defeated him were gathering forces but he didn't say anything in particular. Or rather, he was in a situation where he couldn't say anything. In order to not needlessly give more information than necessary on Fair Bergen away, Hajime made him wear magic sealing shackles which were attached to his feet and arms and a mask which completely shut out light and sound (Yellow soil colored).

After this and after explaining the oath as proof of the Empire's defeat to the elders, they planned to immediately return him through the gate. That was the only reason they brought along the Emperor----there wasn't anything like dignity.

[Fumu, we can't let them stay out here any longer. Guide them inside. Arutena, I'm relying on you]

[Yes, oji-sama. Sa~a, it's this way. Nagumo-sama]

Because of Cam's speech, they attracted too much attention for a simple greeting, so Alfrerick urged Arutena to guide them into the hall that was prepared.

Arutena who received the task, nodded once, and then for some reason she tried to take hold of Hajime's hand while smiling radiantly to guided them. That action wasn't missed in Yue and their eyes. By chance, his right hand had already been held onto by Yue so she aimed towards the left side where Shia was, however Shia similarly smiled radiantly as she casually took back Hajime's left hand.

Shia and Arutena's line of sight intersected. For some reason you could hear an auditory hallucination of electricity being discharged ~Bachi Bachi~.

[We're counting on you (. . . .) to guide us. Arutena-san?]

[Yes, of course, Shia-san. But, since there are lots of people, for the sake of not losing you guys, I'd like to hold onto his hand?]

So she says, Arutena tries to get back Hajime's left hand which Shia took. It appears that she was properly listening to Cams provocation. It was an unbecoming attitude for the princess of the forest people*for some reason the author isn't referring to them as elves anymore, unless forest people in japanese is supposed to stand for elf?*. Rather than facing Hajime so on and so forth*This line's iffy, ハジメに対して云々というより*, Shia's sense of rivalry seemed to have been pretty strong.

[Just according to plan!], is what Cam seems to say as he was grinning from ear to ear, having guessed the circumstances of the surroundings Hajime smiled while releasing blood lust. In an instant, Cam broke out in cold sweat like a waterfall.

Hajime who was slightly stressed let out a sigh towards Cam and tightly gripped onto Shia's hand.

[Ah.....]

Shia unintentionally let out a voice. Then at the next moment she smiled brightly and she tightly embraced Hajime's arm. Although it was his artificial arm, due to its artificial nerves he was able to feel the wonderful feeling of having his left arm buried into her breasts.

While looking at such a happy Shia, Arutena unintentionally looked

towards Hajime, Hajime's eyes were coldly stating, [Quickly guide us in], then her shoulders quickly dropped and she began to downheartedly guide them. From the start, it was imbalanced due to Shia who traveled with him and had lots of contact rather than with Arutena, the results were obvious.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Once they were guided into the hall, the elders sat towards the end, and the Hauria tribesmen including Cam was also at the meeting, and on the right was Gaharudo who sat across from Hajime.

He's already publicly declared the defeat of the Hoelscher Empire and Gaharudo has said the contents of the oath, to which the elders and others can testify to. With this, all elders seemed to admit that the Hauria tribe was telling the truth.

[Fu~n. However, how dare you nonchalantly come here alone. You're our sworn enemy. Surely you don't think you can return safely?]

One of the elders-----Zell of the Toraninzoku*Tiger*, stared at Gaharudo with hate who entered into enemy territory alone haughtily. The atmosphere was like anything could go flying at any moment.

However, even if such a gare was turned to Gaharudo, he was indifferent.

[Ha~a? Isn't it obvious that that's what I thought. I honestly doubt you'd actually try to kill me. If that were to happen then it would only mean that Fair Bergen's leaders are full of idiots]

[What was that you bastard!]

Alfrerick was holding back Zell who was furious.

[Zell, stop it. I understand your feelings. The reason Gaharudo came here was for the sake of pledging to the oath which the Hauria tribe placed on him. Nothing more, nothing less. If he was killed now, then all meaning would be lost in the Hauria's actions which they risked their lives for]
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

[Ku~.....]

Zell made a mortifying face and threw his fist against the floor.

Gaharudo was laughing through his nose when he saw Zell. The atmosphere in that place was the worst. It was clear that Gaharudo had no sense of guilt for having enslaved the Demi-humans and also had no intent of apologising. However, Gaharudo enslaved the Demi-humans because they were weak, the story of the Hauria tribe being able to free the Demi-humans was simply because they were strong. The elders gazed at Gaharudo with murderous intent and the situation further increased as Gaharudo simply laughed provocatively.

The one who easily broke apart that situation without questions asked was Hajime. Quit being so irritating already.

[Oi, Gaharudo. That's enough from you. Hurry up and leave]

[Ah?]

As Hajime got up and ignored Gaharudo's voice of confusion, he activated the gate while firmly holding onto the root of Gaharudo's neck.

[O, oi! You can't be seriously sending me back at this moment! Wait a little, I've finally come to Fair Bergen, there's a lot of things I want to find out about. Also you guys too, tch let go! Kora, you! I'm the Emperor! Don't go dragging me!]

Although Gaharudo was struggling violently, he wasn't able to overcome the inhumane strength holding him and he was mercilessly thrown into the other side of the gate.

Certainly, the reason why they brought along the Emperor was only because he had to admit to the oath that the Hauria created and everything else he says afterwards was unnecessary but.....[I'll remember this! Nagumo Hajime~e!!] as the Emperor shouted out it created a doppler effect as he disappeared onto the other side of the gate, that scene certainly provoked some sympathy.

Ririana who was by the side had an strangely glad face though, [Even though you're an Emperor~, even though you're an Emperor~, the way

you're treated~] she muttered out rhythmically. It appears that she was happy to have made a new comrade in having been treated in the same crude way that she was treated with.

Recently, Ririana had started becoming a regrettable princess, Shizuku who was by her side looked at her regrettably.

On the hand, the elders, especially Zell, were glaring at Hajime. [Why, did you dismiss the Emperor!] is what their eyes were expressing. The truth was quite ridiculous, to be honest, Hajime had no reason to be here either so if Gaharudo was returned then he could quickly leave.

[Please wait, Nagumo-dono. We still haven't decided on an appropriate repayment. Would you please stay around for a bit longer]

[No, I don't need anything, so. Those glances are irritating so we're leaving]

[Don't say that. If nothing is done with this much debt of gratitude, it'll be extremely shameful for us Demi-humans. At the very least, allow us to give you a place to sleep and eat for tonight. That's why, please stay around a while longer]

[....Haa~, I get it]

Although Hajime thought it was troublesome, he nodded to Alfrerick and sat down where he was before. after confirming that, Alfrerick turned around towards Cam.

[Well then, with this, the distinguishing achievements that the Hauria tribe has done has certainly been confirmed. Even though you were banished, you've helped us repel the invasions, moreover, going even as far as getting back all of our brethren from the Empire through an oath. We must repay you at all costs. For the time being, there is no one in opposition towards revoking your banishment. This was already decided after the last elder meeting after the invasion. From now on, you may visit Fair Bergen whenever you wish]

Revoking their banishment. That decision was already overturned at the last elder conference, having admitted to it just showed how big the

achievements that the Hauria tribe contributed to were.

However, Cam only muttered, [Is that so], while not particularly glad at all. His attitude was that anything was fine.

[And also. For your distinguished achievements on this occasion, Cam, as chief of the Hauria tribe, I'd like to propose that as a reward, he may become a new elder. How do you other elders feel about it?]

All of the aides had wide opened eyes in surprise towards Alfrerick's words. Over the last several hundred years, there has never been an event where a different race was presented the seat of elder. It had always been the 6 kinds of Demi-humans, the Forest people, Tiger people, Bear people, Winged people, Fox people, and the natural natives. If you add in the Usagininzoku into that formula, then from the Demi-human's perspective, it could only be referred to as a historical feat of honor for their race.

The other elders looked at one another and nodded after hearing Alfrerick's words, it was a unanimous agreement.

[Fumu, that's how it is. Cam. Will you accept the seat as an elder?]

[Of course, I refuse]

[[[[[.....Eh?]]]]]

Somehow or another, an atmosphere like, [Lets welcome our new companion!] appeared but, Cam easily cut apart that atmosphere. All of the elder's eyes became dots. It seems that they never thought they'd be rejected.

[.....Can I hear why?]

Somehow Alfrerick managed to recover, he was bearing a headache, wondering what was bad about something that Demi-humans thought to have been the greatest reward.

[There's no particular reason, to begin with you guys are fundamentally mistaken about something]

[A misunderstanding?]

[That's right. The reason why all Demi-humans were rescued was only due to the occasion. What made us decide to take action was because we thought about the future which would be the end of the Usagininzoku. The other Demi-humans, if I were to say it, "doesn't matter"]

[……What was that]

The elders looked at Cam unbelievably who was talking indifferently.

[Therefore, don't get the wrong idea. We the Hauria tribe were never your ally. If, you guys who have tasted victory on this occasion decide to go off and wage war on the humans and start stocking up on weapons which cause trouble for us and boss then……you'd best believe that the Hauria tribe's blade will be pointed at you]

[Are, are we not your brethren! Do you plan on pointing your blades towards your own fellow Demi-humans! Isn't that insane!]

[Fu~n, it won't change that you guys look down on the Usagininzoku. There's no point in trying to get all intimate. Ma~a, that kind of thing doesn't really matter. Anyways, all of our blades are held simply for the Usagininzoku's future. As long as you guys carve that onto your chests, then its fine]

Cam's expression after he finished speaking was refreshed. The Hauria who were also behind him were also smiling. Becoming a new elder, if you think we'd use our power for you guys then you're sadly mistaken!- their eyes stated.

truthfully, it would be a lie to say that they haven't calculated that far yet, Alfrerick and their expressions were bitter.

On one side, the people who were waiting around Hajime just watched everything unfold, then they all equally turned their eyes towards Hajime. [I don't care about anyone other than those important to me! I'm not interested! Pe~!] is what Cam's behavior was like, it was exactly like a certain somebody.

[It's as if you're saying that the Usagininzoku are independent from all the other Demi-humans]

[Alfrerick, you're always precise. It's exactly that. From now onwards, the Usagininzoku will be living by the rules of the Usagininzoku. Being incorporated into Fair Bergen's rules like a goody goody is something I want nothing to do with]

Aides and elders, the short-tempered Zell in particular, were extremely angry at Cam who was haughty. Although Cam had a cool face, the Hauria subordinates behind him were, [Ahh? got a problem with that!*Improvised, not really sure what they're doing here, やんのかゴラァ*] just like thugs who wanted to mince things up.

Within that, Alfrerick was thinking about something with a difficult expression, almost like ever since Hajime has showed up he's only been releasing tired expressions, then he talked to Cam.

[Then, Cam. How about if we recognise you guys as, "A race equal to Fair Bergen". Of course, that also gives you a special guest pass into the elders meetings. If we do this then you'd have no obligations to go along with what the elder meetings decide nor the laws of Fair Bergen, with that in mind, you'd have enough influence as us]

[Hoho~u. Ma~a, that's not a bad proposal]

Towards Alfrerick's new proposal, Cam smiled from ear to ear as if stating, [I wanted to hear those words!].

Cam had thought that in preparation for the day when the Empire eventually invades, he wanted some kind of connection with Fair Bergen. However, if he had allowed themsleves to be incorporated into Fair Bergen then he wouldn't be able to ignore the elder meetings and he'd be restricted from moving around freely. That's why it was best if they were an alliance only in name or as an external organization.

But, it was obvious that voices of opposition would appear when the Hauria tribe were getting too much preferential treatment. Against that, Alfrerick answered out while sighing.

[They are people who accomplished things as just a single race? Even if Fair Bergen collaborated with all its power, we'd likely not be able to do it. If you think like that, then its more than enough reason to consider

them as equals? Besides, there's also the possibility that this'll cause the Hauria tribe to cut off all ties with us, do you guys not understand the gravity of loss that'll be for us? If we form an alliance, they who have been banished will once again create a connection. If so then, things of this degree when compared to the size of their accomplishments isn't excessive at all]

Although the elders were twisting their heads while grunting out, gunununu, eventually no good proposals came out so the prestige of a single race was somehow pushed through the elders meeting and they decided to go along with what Alfrerick proposed.

[That's how it is, Cam. As a decision of the elder's meeting, the status of, "The Alliance Race", will be given to he Hauria tribe, would that be fine with you?]

[Ma~a, whether we're recognized or not, what we have to do doesn't change, but those kinds of things would be alright. Ahh, incidentally, we're using the big tree towards the south so you guys shouldn't wander in without permission? We can't guarantee your lives after all]

They never expected that Cam would place an additional order.

Or rather, he selfishly declared it was his land without permission. As expected, even Alfrerick's cheeks twitched a bit. Shia who was besides Hajime had covered her face with both her hands. It seems she was embarrassed at her fathers impudence. Her blood father was letting out a Hyaha~ though.

Afterwards, the strangely tired looking elders left and Hajime and them went towards the big tree and were guided into their rooms at Fair Bergen.

The town was still stirring up a big uproar over the Demi-humans returning. Kouki and them were wondering if there was anything they could help with and took off but, Hajime and them decided to relax in the room indifferently.

By the way, Ririana had returned to the Kingdom a short while ago. It was still necessary to negotiate with the Empire and report of the current

incident as well, they needed to decide the Kingdom's next moves.

Why, didn't she return at once, it was a simple story……from just a few minutes ago. Until Ririana said that she wanted to return to the Kingdom, Hajime had completely forgotten about her existence. When she passed through the gate, it's needless to say but something was shining within Ririana's eyes. *I.E. she was crying*

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Midnight

Even now, clamor can be heard throughout the whole town. They may have been holding some kind of celebration and feast somewhere.

Within that, Hajime and them who were relaxing as they desired inside of their room. But, there was one person who was strangely restless.

It was Shia. Since a while ago, she's been frequently glancing at Hajime and thinking about something.

To begin with, the person in question was receiving a lap pillow from Yue and was partly dozing off into the world of dreams, so he wasn't aware of Shia's state. As expected, his bones gave out after having to carry thousands of people. Yue was gently stroking Hajime who became dull as he relaxed his body, [Fumu], she looked at Shia sideways as she tilt her head.

Right afterwards, she looked at Teio and Kaori who were besides Hajime and were looking at her enviously. And once again, [Fumu], she nodded, she slowly called out to Kaori and Teio.

[…..Kaori, Teio. You want to perform the lap pillow?]

[Eh? You'll switch with us?]

[Mu? Of course I want to]

Teio and Kaori gave her eyes filled with expectations and Yue incidentally laughed.

[…..I'm just asking]
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

[[……..]]

Yue had a smile on her lips as if something foolish happened. When they saw that, a blue vein appeared on Kaori and Teio's forehead. Furthermore, Yue also said, [How is it, you're jealous right?], as she tightly held onto Hajime's head.

[……Yue, are you asking for a fight? Are you?]

[Fufufu, mistress, that annoyed me quite a bit]

[…..Are we doing this?]

Towards Yue's provocative smile, the two people, [If it's the continuation from the daytime then I'll take you up on it!], they said while getting up. By the way, the winners of the matching during the daytime was the Yue and Shia pair.

[……..If you catch me who's running, I'll allow you to be next to Hajime for this night]

[[!]]

As expected, they couldn't hold a mock battle within the town so Yue proposed a game of tag. And the reward for victory was unprecedented. Kaori and Teio's tension became high even though it was midnight.

When Yue confirmed the reaction of the two people, she gently placed Hajime's head onto a pillow and stroke him once lovingly. And as if not affected by gravity, she gently jumped towards the window and just like she was dancing, she opened the window as she turned around.

On that occasion, [What?] she glanced towards shia and blinked her eye for a moment. Shia seemed to realise Yue's intention and with a small smile she nodded in gratitude.

[……Game Start *english*]

As Yue let out those words she slipped out from of the window and in the next moment, she merged with the darkness and disappeared.

[Ku, I'll definitely catch her! For the sake of sharing a bed!]

[Fufu, I won't lose]

With a yell full of spirit. Kaori with her silver wings and Teio who grew dragon wings, jumped out from the window.

Shia who was the onlooker didn't follow them though because she understood that Yue had purposely provoked Kaori and Teio, so she intended to take advantage of the chance that she was thankful for obtaining. Excitedly, she went by Hajime's side and gently woke him up.

[Hajime-san, Hajime-san……please wake up]

[N? What's wrong, Shia. Or rather, just a while ago Yue and them left but…..you didn't go with them?]

Even while he was still half asleep, Hajime had felt from the flow of magical power that Yue and them had left through the window, why are you still here? he tilted his neck.

[Eh~tto, it seems that I missed it somehow or another, that kind of feeling]

[…..Somehow or another, huh]

[Uu~. Rather than that! Everyone else has left, should we also go out for a stroll? I don't know anything about Fair Bergen's interior]

Because of Shia's hair color, she wasn't allowed out in public, so the first time she's been to Fair Bergen was with Hajime and them. At that time as well, since they suddenly left immediately she didn't have time to explore the whole town.

[…..Ma~a, I guess that's fine]

[Yes! It's a midnight date! …….It sounds a little obscene]

[I don't know about that*A who cares, feeling*]

Somehow or another, he felt that Shia wanted to talk, truthfully he wanted to continue sleeping but, Hajime decided that he had no other choice but to follow along. Shia joyfully clung onto Hajime's arm tightly. Then the two with their arms entwined walked out into the midnight of Fair Bergen.

After about 10 minutes, as the two people who were on a stroll were having an innocent talk, they came to notice that they've walked far enough to not hear the town's clamor anymore. And they also noticed that something at the top of the trees were shining out in pale blue light.

[Ah~, those are Montofaruta, Hajime-san]

[Montofaruta?]

[Yes, its a butterfly which emits a pale blue light just like the moonlight. They crowd onto tall trees because of the wind, in the night they look just like cheerful stars in the sky. Except, it's not known when they'll actually emit their light so this is quite a rare sight. You either see it only once a year or see nothing at all]

[He~e, they're certainly beautiful things]

The two who were looking upwards, decided that since it was such a rare sight they should get a closer look so they quickly climbed up higher on a tree, they found a thick branch and sat down beside each other. For a while, they enjoyed the light that the Montofaruta emitted just like a planetarium.

How many of them were there? slowly Shia began to open her mouth.

[Ano, Hajime-san]

[N?]

[Thank you very much. For a lot of things that I can't put in words....really, thank you very much]

[.....Ahh. If you want to fully show your gratitude. Then I'm expecting things from you when we take on the great labyrinth]

[Fufu. Isn't this when you usually say "Don't mind it"?]

Shia laughed giggly towards the Hajime-like answer. However it quickly changed into a difficult expression and she turned her gaze onto Hajime.

[What should I do to repay Hajime-san?]

[If it's repaying then didn't I just receive it?]

[That was just words wasn't it. I want to repay your kindness in some kind of form. Can you think of what I can do which'll make you happy? ……If Hajime-san desires it then, I'll do anything. Really, anything]

Shia's Usamimi's moved around ~Piko Piko~ and she edged her but into contact with Hajime. Her eyes that were looking at Hajime were already moistening and contained heat, and her sighs contained enough heat that it seems like it'll burn on contact. The implied meaning, Hajime had certainly understood what Shia was saying but, he was daringly pretending to have not noticed.

[…..It'll be fine as long as you're still the same happy-go-lucky woman and laughing. You're our mood-maker after all?]

[Mo~u, what's with that, happy-go-lucky you say! Even though you hugged me in front of the Emperor and said I was important! This is the scene where say, [Then I'll have you repay with your body then, guhhehhehhe!], and attack me isn't it. Please read the atmosphere]

[It seems that we need to have a thorough talk about the image that you see me in]

[You're a single-minded good for nothing]

[Being single-minded there is usually a good thing though]

Shia puffed out her cheeks to show that she was dissatisfied. However, she quickly hung her head down disappointedly. Her Usamimi's also hung down as if they suddenly lost their power.

[……I'm serious, I want to do something to thank you. Ever since I've met Hajime-san and everyone else, I've l always gave it my all*I think, 私はずっと貰いっぱなしです*. Although Hajime-san and Yue-san says that its fine if I just laugh but, just being with you 2 will naturally make me feel happy, it's definitely nothing like showing gratitude]

[But still, you're our companion right? I don't think you have to continuously think about such things]

[It's courtesy in intimate relationships. I want to properly thank Hajime-san and Yue-san as well. …..I've thought about it variously but, I

just can't seem to think of anything. Hajime-san says that he doesn't need my body after all.....even though he tightly embraced me and said I was important, to tell me that I'm not needed.....]

[Don't sulk now.....]

Hajime was showing a troubled expression now that Shia was being timid. Even though he was being told that she wanted to express her gratitude, helping someone related to you was the natural course of action, really, just one word, [Thanks] would have been enough.

But, for Shia, those feelings didn't seem to sit well with her.

[If Hajime-san has fallen for me then I wouldn't be going through all these hardships. I'd fully service (thank) you.....ha~a, there's no helping it then. I'll try harder to be much more useful than before as we travel in order to relay my thanks]

[I see]

When Shia shrugged her shoulders, once again, she looked up towards the Montofaruta up above.

While looking at her stature, Hajime was suddenly beginning to remember when he embraced Yue and Shia in front of Gaharudo.

Being truthful, that was pretty much done unconsciously. Once he came to, he had already embraced both of them.

As of now, the huge feelings of declaring someone as "Special" could only be said to Yue. That's something that can be firmly declared. However, even if it was unconsciously, the reason why he held Shia within his arms was.....

Thinking up to that point, Hajime had a smile filled with self-mockery.

How could this be, ma~a, it was because he was selfish. While saying that no one was able to be on par with Yue, to have the desires to possess Shia, it was truly selfish. Once he realised it, Shia's existence somehow became much larger than before. At the very least, as much as Yue where he unconsciously embraced her so that he wouldn't lose her.

Although he'll likely still hold more feelings for Yue than any other person, even still, he doesn't seem to be able to deceive himself about his desire for Shia anymore. Once he became aware of it, he wasn't able to pretend that it wasn't there. If so then, do your best so work hard, how about taking on the attitude of the girl who came with them? Hajime suddenly thought.

[Eh, Ehtto, what is it? It's extremely embarrassing to be quietly stared at....]

Once he came to, Shia's cheeks were dyed red blushing shyly and squirming nervously. Her Usamimi as well as if saying, [U~u, why are you looking~], it suddenly dropped down, occasionally, she'd squirm around and look towards Hajime.

Hajime's eyes soften up when he sees Shia like this and he reached out with his hand. And her shy Usamimis were gently stroked.

[Ha, Hajime-san?]

[.....Na~a, Shia. I've got a favor I want to ask.....]

[A favor? Of course, it's fine! Feel free to ask for anything]

For a moment, she was surprised by Hajime's words, since she could show her gratitude even a little bit, Shia consented willingly while smiling.

[No, lets see, I kinda want to lie down for a bit. If you're up for it, can I ask for a lap pillow?]

[Fu~e, even if you didn't ask, please use it anytime. Sa~a, please step right up]

[Thanks]

Although Shia showed a slightly disappointed expression from Hajime's request, she was happy that she was giving him a lap pillow and she patted her thighs with a bright smile. Hajime expressed his thanks with a smile and laid down without hesitation.

Because Shia wore a miniskirt, he was able to fully feel the feelings of

her thighs. A soft and warm puffy feeling supported Hajime's head. It faintly resembled Yue's, as a sweet scent tickled his nose.

[Fufu, it's unfortunate for Kaori-san and Teio-san. Around this time, they're fighting against Yue-san in order to give Hajime-san a lap pillow, but I've already taken it ahead of them]

[Ma~a, Yue'll win anyways so there's no reason to worry about it?]

[You shouldn't say such things. Since they're want to make Hajime-san fall for them they're working hard. Really, I wonder when will Hajime-san finally fall for me~]

[.....Will you give up?]

[No way~]

[I see~]

Shia was gently stroking Hajime's hair. Hajime narrowed his eyes as he became comfortable. And as payback, he played with Shia's hair that hung down before him. The pale blue white hair was really mysterious when it was combined with the light being emitted by the Montofaruta that were above them.

If someone had seen Shia and Hajime right now, they would have surely had an face which vomited due to the sugar. That was how sweet those two's atmosphere was. Right, it was exactly like the separate world that Hajime and Yue created.

However, unfortunately, although it was the atmosphere which was created with Yue that Shia longed for, she didn't notice at all. On that part, perhaps Shia could truly be called a regrettable rabbit.

Even with the actual person not realising, the sweet time continued to flow gently. Within the moonlight where the Montofaruta illuminated, Hajime and Shia were enjoying their time alone with each other.

lol Author notes that it's getting near the end so there should at least be some kind of progression with another girl other than Yue

Chapter 124: Imitation

This is not meant to be a perfect translation, I cannot read japanese characters and this was carefully edited based on translations I got from my Machine Translator. Therefore, there are bound to be errors here and there! At best, this could be considered as an unedited Final Draft towards an Official Translation

* * *

In the dense fog that clung onto bodies, people's shadow could be seen moving on without hesitation.

It was Hajime and them.

With Shia in the front, Hajime and them are currently heading towards the big tree. It's the second day after they've arrived at Fair Bergen, the cycle for the path to the big tree to open has finally come.

Within that time, there were various disturbances which Hajime and them were caught up in as they stayed in Fair Bergen but, if you compare it with what usually happens, it's likely not to such a high extent that it couldn't be categorized as their daily lives.

Mainly, the thing with Kouki and the freed slaves (girls), a group of male Demi-human's were doing this and that to hajime because of the thing with Arutena, and Ryutaro was doing this and that with the Demi-humans martial arts masters……those kind of stories.

Along the way, forest demons launched a surprise attack under the fog. However, Hajime and the rest, Yue, Shia, Teio, and the Hauria didn't deal with it at all, they left everything up to Kouki and them. Since they didn't know what kind of trials the great labyrinth [Harutsuina Sea of Trees] holds, as a warm up they were told to take out the demons.

To begin with, because the Sea of Trees drives the senses of other races besides the Demi-humans mad, it was completely different than fighting against the demons at [Orcus Great Labyrinth], Kouki and them were having a pretty hard fight. They kept teasing by using hit and run tactics

repeatedly and Ryutaro was plainly irritated at the demons who made full use of the dense fog.

[……There! Like this….this!]

Within there, Kaori was mixed into Kouki and them's repeated combat.

Kaori still wasn't completely in full control of Nointo's body yet so she was there voluntarily to train. It appears that, the dense fog didn't effect Nointo's body as much, it seems to be just the right adjustment for the battle experience and trace skills that Nointo had.

Even now, while fluttering her wings which shined in silver, it shot out silver feathers to repel the demons. It appears that she's gotten used to using the silver feathers, as if they were homing missiles, they launched out at the demons and instantly decomposed them to nothingness.

[Ya!]

In addition, while giving out a shout, the approaching demons who slipped past the silver feathers were wonderfully cut into 2 by the great sword that was clad in silver light that was pulled out in an instant.

It seems that she still couldn't wield them freely like how Nointo did but, if its just one hit then she's considerably skilled. At the very least, it was at the level where she couldn't be embarrassed to call herself a "Swordsman".

[I seem to be considerably getting used to this. It's worthwhile that I get into a fight with Yue everyday] *<-This part may be wrong, it sounds different from what the machine's actually giving me, ユエと喧嘩しているだけの事はある*

[……Your spec's are abnormal. I can't afford to be careless]

Hajime let out a breath and muttered, [Fuu~], as he watched Kaori's figure.

Although she's still not on the original Nointo's level yet which was able to give the Hajime at full power a hard fight, but if you think about her growth rate, it was wonderful since it was still only around 10 days

since her soul was transferred. Kaori's diligence is likely allowing her to rapidly master Nointo's fighting power.

[That's not true. I'm still not accustomed to using magic while fighting, if I don't concentrate on Decomposition it wont activate as well.....I still can't even get a hit off of Yue]

It appears that she heard the conversation between Hajime and Yue, Kaori was pouting as she moved forwards. She wants to quickly become stronger, she has the image but, she's frustrated that it doesn't go as she thought it would.....those kind of feelings are reflected on her expression.

[.....Kaori. What are you saying. Your physical abilities exceeds ours, you have the brutal ability of decomposition in your silver wings, and you've got aptitude in all attributes and can use magic without having to chant and without magic formations. Your swordsmanship is also progressing limitlessly like a joke as well, due to your proficiency in recovery magic, your defenses are like a fortress, even if they successfully inflict a wound onto you, it'll heal up immediately....it's already unsuitable to call you a cheat anymore, you're more like a bugged character. Yet you're still dissatisfied?]

Shizuku pointed out her specs as if she was amazed, Kaori had felt that she definitely felt like a monster so she just let her eyes wander around.

[But, I can't defeat Yue or Shia.....if I'm a bugged character then, what are Hajime-kun and them?]

[.....Something hard to describe or something...like that.....]

Shizuku was showing a difficult expression as she thought of the best way to describe Hajime and them, it seems that nothing came to mind in the end. Kouki called out to Shizuku.

[It's fine, Shizuku. As long as we can clear the great labyrinth then even we can become as strong as Nagumo. No, if you think about Nagumo's non-fighting class, surely we'd be able to be stronger than him]

[Looks like it. I'm looking forwards to find out what kind of magic we'll obtain]

[Un, lets do our best!]

Although Hajime's strength doesn't come solely from Age of Gods magic, Kouki who was through with it was strongly clenching his fist. Ryutaro and Suzu also seemed to have been pumped up.

[Every~one, We've reached it~]

When Kouki and them were firing themselves up, Shia tells them of their arrival at the big tree as she looked back over her shoulder. When Hajime and them chased after Shia who advanced ahead and disappeared into the other side of the fog, they arrived at a space that had no fog. Towering in front was a withered huge tree just exactly like they saw before.

[This is.....the big tree.....]

[It's large.....]

[It's extremely.....huge]

While looking above their heads, they weren't even able to see the top of the big tree, Kouki and them had their mouths opened absentmindedly as its width was so long it was as if they were standing in front of a wall. Surely it was the same expression anyone else would have had when seeing it for the first time, Hajime and Yue had a small smile while looking at eachother.

Hajime approached the lithograph while pulling out all the proofs that he's obtained from the other great labyrinths out of his "Treasure Warehouse". The lithograph hasn't changed since last time, crests of the 7 great labyrinths are drawn on the front and it's back was hollow in order to allow the proofs to be place in.

While crouching down, Hajime was playing with the 5 proofs in his palm, Kouki and them were finally freed from the large tree's dignified appearance and focused on Hajime. From now on it'll be a place where anything can truly happen at anytime. While bracing themselves, Hajime looked sharply at Kouki and them.

[Cam, Since we don't know what'll happen from now on, back off with

the Hauria tribe]

[Roger, boss. May fortune be with you]

By Fair Bergen's negotiations, the south land with the big tree became Cam and their territory but, from Hajime's words his expression became a bit disappointed, However he still decided to salute and then everyone spread out together.

When he confirmed that, Hajime slowly placed the [Orcus Great Labyrinth] ring of proof into the hollow section of the lithograph. Once it was placed, the lithograph began to shine faintly and characters appeared.

"4 proofs"

"Power of Reproduction"

"Guidepost of weaved bonds"

"A path for a new trial shall be open for those who have everything"

[This is the same as before as well. The used proof....is anything other than [Kamiyama] fine]

Hajime went ahead and set the proofs into the lithograph that while muttering. [Raisen's Ring] [Guryuen's Pendant] [Merujine's Coin]……

Each time one was set into the lithograph, it's light strengthened up. And immediately after placing the final coin, the light was set free and it scattered onto the front of the big tree, this time the big tree was the one that shined brightly.

[Mu? A crest has appeared on the big tree]

[…..Next is, the power of Reproduction?]

As Teio muttered with great interest, a pattern of the 7 angel systems stood out on the trunk of the large tree. Yue walked towards the shining pattern and while quietly touching it she used Reproduction magic.

Immediately afterwards,

Pa~aaaaa!!

The big tree was wrapped up in a light uncomparable to before, a wave of light was continuously rippling towards the top from the place that Yue had touched.

The big tree that was shining brightly, gradually revived as the light spread out to every corner as if it was absorbing water from its roots.

[Ah, leaves.....]

Shia pointed at the leaves which appeared as the tree regained it's vitality with each passing moment. It was almost like looking at the birth of life, Hajime and them were staring at what was in front of their eyes with a mysterious feeling, the big tree was quickly growing and it regained its bright green looks.

As a slightly strong wind blew by, the sound of the large tree's leaves rustling around could be heard. Then, at the next moment, all of the sudden, the front of the tree trunk was split from the right and left and a cave appeared. It was a big cave which could fit several tens of people.

Hajime and them looked at each others faces and nodded to each other and stepped into the cave without hesitation.

Hajime was slightly concerned------would the other members who have not captured 4 great labyrinths actually be able to challenge the great labyrinth of the Sea of Trees, but it appears that it was pointless worries. Everyone was able to enter the cave without a problem.

It was probably like the other great labyrinths in the stance of, [If you want to enter, it's fine as long as you have what's necessary. However, your life is not guaranteed].

Hajime looked around the surroundings. But, there didn't seem to be anything particular in the cave. It was simply a huge space which extended out like a dome.

[Is it a dead-end?]

Kouki muttered out doubtfully.

Immediately afterwards, the entrance to the cave began to shut as if it

had been reverse-reproductioned.

The light from the outside gradually thinned out. Hajime scolded Kouki who instinctively panicked. When the entrance was completely shut, the inside of the cave was wrapped in darkness, immediately Yue secured a light source and held it up in her hand. However there was no need for it.

That's because a huge magic formation appeared underneath their legs and it emitted strong light.

[Uwa, what's this!]

[What's up! What is this!]

[Quit making so much noise! Its a transfer magic formation! Don't be careless when you're transferred!]

After Hajime warned the shaken Ryutaro and Suzu, their view blacked out.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

[~.....This is.....]

What reflected in Hajime and their view when the light returned was a lush forest. A sea of trees inside of a tree.....created an indescribably odd situation.

[Is everyone alright?]

Kouki lightly shook his head and confirmed his surroundings for the safety of his comrades. There Shizuku and them, [We're fine], replied. Yue, Shia, Teio, and Kaori didn't seem to have any particular problems either, they watched their surroundings with caution.

[Nagumo, this is really the great labyrinth right? .....Which way should we progress in?]

The place where Hajime and them were transferred to was, a vacant circled lot where they were completely surrounded by trees in 360 degrees, there wasn't a guidepost indicating which way they should go either.
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Since it's covered in a dense fog, it doesn't seem like flying overhead to look for a path would be useful. That's why Kouki asked Hajime who had lots of experience with great labyrinths.

[……For the time being, we've got no choice but to look around]

Hajime muttered out with a slightly displeased expression, he placed his hand onto the trunk of a tree and activated "Tracing". A magic mark was created, a bright red arrow was placed onto the tree and pointing in the direction where they were going.

When Kouki and them saw that they nodded. It seems they understood that they had no choice but to search while placing signs. And they took the lead since they heard that even if you cleared the labyrinth, if they weren't recognized by the great labyrinth then they wouldn't be able to obtain Age of Gods magic.

The other members followed behind successively. However, only Hajime didn't move from his place as his eyes retained coldness within it. As they began to walk, Shia noticed and a "?" appeared over her head as she turned back towards Hajime.

[……Hajime-san? Whats wro----]

Shia called out to Hajime……in that moment,

Shuba!

When they heard that wind-like noise ring out, in a instant Yue and Teio, as well as Ryutaro were coiled by a wire, with both spheres on both ends fixed into the air they were restrained. Hajime had taken out the bola from his "Treasure Warehouse" and quickly thrown them to bind them.

Yue, Teio, and Ryutaro wiggled around as they struggled. When Kouki and them saw that they were dumbfounded. However, once they regained their sanity and as if it was able to produce a ~Ki~ sound they immediately glared strongly at Hajime.

[Nagumo! What exactly are you doing!]

Kouki instinctively raised his voice angrily. Shizuku and them had tensed expressions as their eyes conveyed that they wanted an explanation from Hajime.

[……Be quiet for a bit]

However, Hajime only said that and didn't answer Kouki and their doubts and silently looked towards Yue, he briskly walked up towards her who was expressionless.

And, as Yue looked up at Hajime perplexedly, Hajime pressed Donner against her forehead. His eyes had a coldness of absolute zero within them, it was obvious that Hajime was completely furious in anger.

[Hajime….What i-]

Yue had a, I can't believe it, expression as Hajime pointed his muzzle at her. And when she tried to voice out her doubt as she called Hajime's name.

However, immediately after that,

Dopan!

Hajime pulled Donner's trigger without hesitation. A dry explosive noise echoed throughout the sea of trees. For now, although the muzzle was removed from Yue's forehead and pointed towards her shoulder, even still it didn't change the fact that Hajime had shot his beloved lover.

Towards that fact, it was obvious that Kouki and them as well as Shia and them were intensely shaken. And they looked at Hajime with eyes that doubted his sanity.

[Wha, what are you doing! Nagumo-kun!]

[Hajime-kun! Stop!]

Shizuku and Kaori raised their voices to attempt to stop Hajime who was filled with rage but, Shia finally noticed the sense of incongruity and held onto Kaori and them by the hand instead.

Although there was an air like Kouki would spring at any moment to try and restrain Hajime but, that disappeared after Hajime's next words.

[Don't speak without permission, Imitations. You're only an imitation and you dare imitate Yue's voice. If you dare to call my name with that voice again. I'll scrape off your hands and feet]

The moment Hajime uttered his voice, as if the ground was arctic cold, the air was filled with coldness. However the temperature hasn't actually fallen. Murderous intent was overflowing from his body and in turn dropped the heat that life was giving out. Somehow, even the surroundings became dark. Towards the dense murderous intent, Kouki and them naturally became shallow breathed and cold sweat ran down like a waterfall.

[What are you? Where is the real Yue?]

[.....]

Yue's appearance was as if stating, "What is it", with her expression and was silently unmoved in her stance *<-I improvised and have a feeling the ending here is incorrect by a lot, ユエの姿をした"何か"は表情をストンと落とすと無機質な雰囲気を纏って無言を貫いた*. Rather than "Who are you" it was "What are you", this was because blood was not flowing from where she was shot in the shoulder. It was obvious that it wasn't a "person".

Dopan!

This time Hajime shot through the opposite shoulder. However the fake Yue still didn't change her expression. It appears that they didn't have a sense of pain. Just like Nointo, they carried an image as if they were puppets, or they may not actually have any will of their own.

[Are you not going to answer. .....No, do you not have a function to answer. Then its fine already. Die]

Dopan!

This time Hajime pointed Donner's muzzle onto Yue's forehead and used a rail gun to blast her head off. Behind Yue (Fake), something was splattering and scattering.

Although Shizuku and them instinctively turned away from it, if you took the time to look at it, it wasn't a brain but a rust colored slime that

had scattered. Yue's (Fake) body which lost it's head was beginning to melt after one beat, it similarly turned into a rust colored slime and stained into the ground.

Hajime continued to shoot through Teio and Ryutaro's heads consecutively while they were still restrained by the bola. As the two people splattered Kouki and them instinctively had goosebumps but, as expected they turned into a rust colored slime and were inhaled into the ground just like the Yue (Fake) slime.

[Chi. As expected of a great labyrinth. Starting right off the bat....]

Hajime cursed out as he holstered Donner.

[Hajime-san.....Yue-san and Teio-san are.....]

[They must have been transferred to a different location from earlier. There was a slight sense of the feeling when our memories were being searched by Age of Gods magic. The rust colored slimes who obtained the memories used their mimic abilities to disguise themselves, it felt like they had openings from behind?] *<-Unsure about this part, 隙を見て背後からって感じじゃないか*

Hajime's expression distorts into a bad mood as his lover turned into soup. Shizuku and Suzu nodded as if they felt admiration as they heard Hajime's guess.

[I see. .....Even still you've done good to notice]

[Un un, Suzu wasn't able to tell the difference at all. How did you notice?]

Suzu asked for Hajime's identification tips as it would be troubling if they couldn't distinct their own comrades apart. Kouki looked at Hajime with interest as well while worrying about the safety of his best friend.

Hajime's answer towards that question was....

[Even if you asked me. .....I can only say that the instant I saw them, I noticed. What was before my eyes was "Not my Yue"]

[[[[[.....]]]]]

In a sense, all members lost their strength when the answer was him speaking fondly of his sweetheart.

[Then, how about Ryutaro-kun and Teio-san?]

[Once you know that there are imposters then, with the “Magic Eye Stone” if you look carefully you can see a sense of incongruity. That’s why you don’t have to worry as long as you’re with me from now on]

Is that so~, Kouki and them looked at Hajime amazedly. Within that, as if Shia thought of something she went, ~ha~, while fidgeting she asked Hajime while expecting something.

[Ano, Hajime-san.....if it was me, would you also notice it in an instant?]

[!]

Kaori who was next to Shia reacted, in her glance she asked, [How about me?]. Somehow or another eyes were attracted to Hajime. Inside of the delicate bittersweet atmosphere, Hajime answered plainly without much vigor.

[Sa~a? Isn’t it impossible for just a moments glance?]

[[.....]]

Usually while one was reading the air, [Of course, Isn’t it obvious that I’d realize it?], and answer like that but, this was part of Hajime’s quality. While thinking that he mercilessly answered.

Unintentionally Shia and Kaori continued to stare at him but, Hajime continued to advance into the depths of the sea of trees while being indifferent about the two people’s glances.

[It’s questionable how he can have such strong nerves....]

[Au, Kaolin, Shiashia, cheer up!]

[Kaori is really, what about that guy is.....]

While following after Hajime, Shizuku and them glanced at Shia and Kaori who puffed their cheeks in a bad mood from their appeal. While having various problems at the the start of the line, they stepped into the

sea of trees.

By the way, in his mind, [If it was Shia I'd know], is what Hajime had thought but.....he had just decided to take on an honest attitude but he carelessly said that bluntly so he may very well be a tsundere.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Vuu~uu"uu"uu"uu"!!

Exactly like an electric fan moving at maximum speeds, that kind of sound was echoing in the sea of trees. It wasn't one or two either. It was the buzzing of countless numbers. Translucent wings that were flapping at super-high speeds were already like a kind of attack as the noise reverates.

[Uu~, gross~, "Beyond Heaven-ugh"!]

[Don't whine! Suzu, it went that way!]

[Ku, it's quick! "Heavenly Flying Sword"!] *<-What I'm calling it, 天翔剣*

Suzu looking like she wanted to cry as she was holding in the physiological disgust she felt from looking at the demon.

That may be something that can't be helped. After all, the reason for the buzzing was a toddler sized "Bee". If you compared it in form then it would be a hornet. The super-huge bee-typed demon were attacking in swarms with their tough jaws and lethal stingers.

With a malicious yellow and black hue, their jaws creaked as it opened and closed, their stingers had green liquid dripping from it, their feet that waved around eerily, and their dark red compound eyes.....it certainly was a creature that you'd want to avoid.

Moreover, this bee-typed demon were hard to deal with because they were quick and they cooperated in groups. Furthermore, they could continuously shoot out their needles since a new one would immediately grow in its place, from mid-range it was exactly like a machine-gun so there was the threat of being swept by a rain of stingers.

Somehow Suzu's barriers were keeping out the stingers, as opposed to
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Kouki's method of hammering them with a single blow, Shizuku was breaking apart their cooperation and speed, however the swarm of bee's were not decreasing in numbers at all.

[Damn, these guys, they're exactly like the Majinzoku's demons!]

[No, it's reversed isn't it? They're monsters are similar to the great labyrinth's monsters]

Kouki wielded his sacred sword with a desperate look, he remembered the scene of bloodshed that they experienced previously and unintentionally cursed out. They had absolutely no space to relax because the great labyrinth's monsters were so strong.

At the moment a mantis-shaped demon that was around 2 meters in length was about to do a surprise attack on Kouki from behind but, Hajime killed it in an instant and tsukkomied at the same time.

A slight distance away from Hajime, Shia was killing 3 meter ant-typed demons in a single hit with Doryukken and blasting through the ground building a mountain of corpses. Kaori wasn't losing either, she continuously shot out silver feathers and close to 30 bee's were already shot down and decomposed.

When Kouki saw the spectacle that came into view, he grit his teeth as he feels the difference between Hajime and their powers once again.

["Beyond Heaven-ugh" "Beyond Heaven-ugh"! It's useless. We'll be overwhelmed!]

Suzu who was close to tears, created several shining shields, she kept repeatedly building new ones as soon as the previous ones were destroyed, Suzu's magical power was mercilessly shaved down.

"Beyond Heaven" is not that strong but its strength is that it can be produced in great numbers, Suzu was a "Barrier Master" so her barriers also carried enough strength to take on several attacks from normal demons before they were destroyed.

However, in front of the bee-typed demon's stingers that they shot out, those barriers were instantly broken as if they were paper waste,

currently Suzu was being forced to deploy barriers at unprecedented speeds.

Little by little, little by little, the deployment of barriers were being delayed and the scene of flying stingers gradually fills the distance, it was as if she was being strangled by a line of silk and it damaged Suzu's mind.

[Run rampant, "Thunder Flower"! mince them, "Flash Claw"!]*<-What I'm calling it, 爪閃*

Along with Shizuku's chants, a sinister flower of thunder bloomed in the sky, and a claw of wind minced through. She demonstrated her black katana's abilities on the approaching bee-typed demons.

With her sharp swordsmanship, she was certainly feeling the feedback of the demons being torn apart. With Shizuku being a Speed Fighter, being paired up against the bees was a good match. While disturbing their cooperation with her free movement skill "No Rhythm", one by one she was sure to slaughter them.

However, the bee-typed demon's strength was their numbers. Even if she could defeat them, Shizuku was lacking in overwhelming annihilation powers. Hence, the war situation was that they were gradually being pushed, Shizuku who noticed that had a bitter expression.

[Will of the blade, harboring light which will tear apart the enemy! "Light Blade"!]

Thanks to Shizuku, Kouki was able to chant as he liked and his sacred sword was coated by a sword of light.

The light blade extended his sacred sword by about another 2 meters in length. Kouki swung the huge blade of light while rotating his body in one motion which cut through all gathered surrounding bee-typed demons.

However because the motion of the attack held too many openings, the demons charged in towards him. In response his body was hurled backwards.

[Ku, why you!]

[Kouki!]

The bee-typed demon was about to thrust its stinger into him but, fortunately, Kouki's sacred armor prevented the stinger from coming near, Kouki somehow managed to use that chance to get up and cut off it's head.

He had no room to answer Shizuku's worried voice. In the next moment, he was attacked by huge quantities of demons so Kouki needed to finish recovering his balance.

[Uo~ooooo!]

Although Kouki waved his sacred sword while shouting, the demons in the great labyrinth weren't sweet enough to spare you any time when you've exposed a chance. At last, a bee-typed demon managed to slip past the sacred sword and get behind him, it then clung onto him from behind like spikes on shoes, it was trying to use its jaws to tear through Kouki's neck.

[~!?]

Kouki raised a voiceless scream.

in that juncture,

Dopan!

A gunshot.

The moment when the bee's jaws were about to pierce through Kouki's neck, a flash of light surged out from the side as it cut through the sky and easily blew off the bee-typed demon's head off.

Kouki who was unsteady due to the aftereffect, ignored the heat that he felt on his neck and separated himself from the remains of the bee-typed demon that was clinging onto him. Although it was a narrow escape from death, Kouki's cheeks cramped as more demons swarmed him.

------I'll be overwhelmed!

He was convinced. A voice that had no sense of panic was heard in Kouki's ears.

[Don't move, Amanogawa]

Immediately afterwards, countless meteors fell down upon the bee-typed demons and mercilessly trampled them.

Doo~opan! Doo~opan! Doo~opan! Doo~opan! Doo~opan!

You could only hear one gunshot but, the truth was that there were 6 flashes produced. *<- lol wut? the author only had 5 Doo~opan's*

The shining red spear of light pierced through all demons in the line of fire and killed them instantly. In addition, the bullets were shot out with well-thought out trajectories, they went through the air and collided with the other bullets and with that slight change in angle they efficiently pierced through more Demons.

According to their viewpoint, it almost seemed as if the enemies voluntarily jumped into the bullets. Such special technique could be called an admirable performance, the demons which were giving Kouki a hard time were overwhelmed by Hajime, the bullets were continuously spinning and reloading one another, in addition Donner and Schlag shot out when they fell into confusion.

……It didn't even take 1 minute before everything was taken care of. It was instant killings.

Hajime who annihilated the bee-typed demons in no time at all holstered Donner and Schlag as if nothing happened, he approached the defeated monsters as Kouki and them were stunned.

[Chi, it doesn't seem like there's any meaning even if I ate them.....]

[E, eat? Eh, Nagumo-kun, you intended to eat this? Seriously?]

Instinctively, Shizuku asked after being influenced by the previous act of devastation.

[Did I not say it before? .....If I eat a demon which is equal or higher than me, I can take in the opponents inherent magic for myself. In the abyss, the only thing there was to eat were demons. Ahh, you guys shouldn't copy me. Without a doubt you'd die]

[Even if you didn't say it, we wouldn't. Hearing it once again is truly sublime.....]

Shizuku was looking at Hajime with a complex expression. He's really reliable since he's helped them countless times by now but, she was reminded once again of where that power came from was through a sublime experience, she was lost on whether she should honestly feel admiration or not.

[Bu, but, why aren't you eating this thing then? No, as for Suzu, suzu doesn't want to see such a predation scene so you don't have to eat it but.....]

[I just said it just now? There's no meaning unless they're equal or higher than me. The guys around here are all small frys]

[.....I See~. For Nagumo-kun, this monster is a small fry~. I see~, ahaha]

[Suzu, I understand your feelings so don't break. Please come back]

Suzu who was giving a dry laugh as if slightly broken and Shizuku was sighingly asking her to regain her sanity.

[.....]

Within that, only Kouki was staring at the remains of the demons that Hajime had created while tightly grasping the sword in his grip. For himself, the enemy was powerful to the extent where he had almost lost his life, but Hajime evaluated them as if they were just stones on the side of the road without any value, he felt unpleasant from their difference in ability. Although he was trying to pretend to not notice, dark emotions were beginning to swell up again within his heart.

Hajime glanced over at Kouki who was standing still silently.

[.....Amanogawa]

[~. Wh, what is it?]

[For now just think about finding your childhood friend. Being worried about this and that, it'll be fine as long as you do what you have to do]

[Ah, ahh. You're right, we have to quickly find Ryutaro and them....]

Although he stuttered somewhat, Kouki nodded firmly towards Hajime's words. He braced himself again to search for his missing childhood friend.

After Hajime was glancing at Kouki like that, he seemed to have lost interest and averted his glance.

As a matter of fact, Hajime had clearly understood what Kouki was feeling. Inferiority complex and frustration, jealousy of strength.....they were emotions which Hajime had felt once before.

He never thought that Kouki who had everything would be feeling that way towards himself, it was a rather ironic subject. As Hajime was thinking about such things, because he had no feelings to consider for Kouki, he was simply through with it. The words from awhile ago that Hajime said out was already a big treat.

[Hajime-san, the other side was cleaned up~]

[Fu~u, this side is done too]

In the meantime, Kaori and Shia who finished dealing with the demons came back.

[Alright. Well then, shall we depart. I think that if its Yue and Teio then it's alright but, we should still regroup with them as quickly as possible. Sakagami is.....ma~a, whatever happens, happens]

[Wha-, aren't you treating Ryutaro too crudely? Say, I know that your lover is important and all but....]

From what Hajime said, Shizuku had a troubled expression as she tsukkomied. The party advanced through the interior of the sea of trees to look for their companions who were separated from them.

Chapter 125: Even if the Appearance Changes

ZUDOOOOON! DOOGOOOON! GOOBAAA!

A roar shakes the ground in the sea of trees over and over, creatures which inhabit it were desperate to escape from the center of the explosion while panicking.

[Oraa! I'll destroy this forest, get out of my way!]

Among the sounds that roared consistently, you could hear a scream.

It was Hajime's voice.

Incidentally, it is Hajime who bombs the sea of trees in the present while scattering the roaring sound. A vein on his forehead is showing while he uses "Orkan" (TL: His rocket launcher) in both hands and randomly shooting rockets and missiles.

[A, Ano, Hajime-san, anymore is .....]

[That's right, Hajime-kun, I'm sure that demon is already died, too and ....]

Without hiding his anger and frenzy, hundred of rockets and missiles were already shot by Hajime who keeps shooting cluster bombs with the "Cross Bits" from the sky in the forest, while Shia and Kaori fluster to restrain him.

However, ...

[Well, what?]

[Ie, it is nothing.]

[Un, I'm sorry to bother you.]

The two retracted their previous remarks immediately, because Hajime looked back with bloodshot eyes. (TL: He looked with blood lust.)

[Uu,.... scary. Shizushizu~ stop him.]

[Do not say the unreasonable, Suzu. I do not want to die yet. I think it's also reasonable why he is angry.....]

Shizuku gives out a sigh while she's calming Suzu who is clinging to her. She looks a little to the side. There was a crouching figure that was suppressing his own eyes with both hands while weeping.

[My eyes~, my eyes~, damn it, Nagumo! What are you doing so suddenly!]

A voice of agony is raised like a colonel from somewhere. It was the state of a person who got his eyes busted. Also, according to the words, Kouki's eyes were pierced by Hajime who used his fingers like scissors.

So why is Hajime so mad that he burned the forest and crushed Kouki's eyes?

After Hajime and the others fought a bee-shaped demon, they searched in the sea of trees for approximately 30 minutes. It was because of the encounter of a certain demon.

The demon was a monkey-type which attacked in crowds. The attacks flew from all angles freely by using the trees as a foothold and it was fairly troublesome. They were equipped with sword and clubs etc. Though it was unknown where they got these weapons.

Kouki, Shizuku and Suzu were fighting the monkey-demons and were played around with the tricky movements of them. Naturally, the monkey-demons were not Hajime's enemy, as one would expect.

Hajime, who wanted to join with Yue as fast as possible, let Kouki's group spar with the enemy to some degree.

Is it possible that the monkey-demon has some intelligence? The monkey-demons tried to take hostages. However, for Hajime, the thinking of that degree was too shallow. The monkey-demons that tried to take a hostage were all killed.

In those circumstances, the monkey-demons realized that they are no match and tried to withdraw, however..... it accidentally made the wrong choice. It was the worst decision they could have made.

The main cause is the peculiar magic of the monkey-demons – “Mimicry”. It is the same one as the one from the rust-colored Slime which made Hajime angry.

They also got the information of Yue’s group and it is possible for them to disguise themselves as the companions which Hajime’s group was separated from. However, unlike the rust-colored Slime, the monkey-demons were more intelligent.

In other words, it is possible for them to mimic actions which would disturb the others. They were able to think of that.

As a result, they used “Mimicry”. It was to be used against the most dangerous enemy with the person they value the most. It was the lowest method to shake them up.

The monkey-demons dragged their brethren that used mimicry from the back of the bush. Its appearance was that of Yue. The figure that was dragged along was badly bruised with an unladylike appearance. Because it is based on the information of the teleported team, the appearance is exactly the same as the real one. (TL: Yep. They dug their own graves now.)

Of course, Hajime was able to see through the mimicry of the rust-colored Slime before, so he obviously knew it was not Yue.

Still, even with Yue’s nudity and miserable appearance you can’t tell the difference between the fake a real thing. When closing in the distance with his “Instant Movement” (TL: Shukichi, Flicker, whatever was used before.), Kouki’s eyes, which almost looked at the “Mimicry”-Yue, were crushed.

At this point, though Hajime has already started losing his temper, it was still enough for his reason to work. However, the monkey-demons, despite their high intelligence, couldn’t read the mood. They hit the “Mimicry”-Yue in front of Hajime with a smile. In addition the “Mimicry”-demon was imitating Yue’s voice. [.....Hajime, help me]. It became a serious matter because of that.

At that moment, everyone heard it. “BUCHI” was heard and something

snapped. (TL: sound effects, think of it as a snapping sound)

And now, you can see a part of the sea of trees surrounded by flames of hell.

The scorched field which was 500 meters in every direction was already complete. If you look here and there you can see carbonized humanoids. In the wreckage, bee- and ant-demons were also seen.

Because it was an instant air strike, there will probably be not a demon that escaped unless some demons can make a space metastasis.

After Hajime burned everything in the sea of trees, he advanced while ignoring everything else.

[Don't give up you both, please! Who else can stop Hajime-san other than Shia and Kaori!"

[But....]

[No buts. Why do you give up here? It ends when you give up! Hora, do your best! Hang in there! Dekiru, Dekiru! (2xYou can do it!) A maiden in love is invincible!]

The words from Shizuku, reminiscent of some coach, inspired Shia and Kaori. To be frank, Shizuku was desperate to make the two to go to Hajime as he was hard to approach now.

Without knowing the real intentions of Shizuku, Shia and Kaori nod to each other and jumped at Hajime while he was reloading "Orkan".

[Hajime-san! Leave it at this!]

[That's right, Hajime-kun. You may drag Yue's group into it!]

He desperately glares at Shia and Kaori clinging to him. Hajime seems to be dissatisfied and utters a twisted expressions and raised his voice with an [A?, a?]

The appearance was, no matter how you look at it, one of a person that wanted to free his head. However, as he sees the two going [Ne?, Ne?], he regained his composure after a while.

[Fuuuuuu~~~~~ I understand. For now I'll leave it at this. I feel refreshed after shooting.]

Hajome relaxed his shoulders and called back the "Cross Bits" and put them away along with "Orkan" into the "Treasure Box". Shia and Kaori regained their composure and let out a relieved breath.

[My bad, I made you take care of me.]

[Ie, I also got mad at their methods. It was inevitable.]

[Un, really, it was the worst..... In a sense it was expected from the great labyrinth.]

When Hajime regained his composure he showed a wry smile, the two shaked his head while shaking their own heads in denial.

When Hajime was talking in the background of a part of the sea of tree that almost turned into wasteland, Shizuku stepped forward while having a cramp on her cheek.

[Naguno-kun, if you calmed down could you do something about Kouki ....]

With the words [Ah, Now that you mention it.] Hajime turns around to Kouki.

Kouki was shedding tears while sobbing. His appearance was indescribably pitiful. Kaori immediately used recovery magic when it was suggested by a glance.

[Uu, This feeling. Is it recovery magic? Oh, i can see light] (TL: Yes he sees light, maybe he should also see a tunnel and go into it?)

Kouki is liberated from the pain in his eyes and is looking joyfully. In addition, when Hajime who is the ringleader of the pain is spotted, he lifted his eyes and raises a voice of protest.

Shizuku explains the situation and the other party shows a dissatisfied face.

[You see, Amanogawa, though i am at fault, i couldn't hold back. It was a critical moment of whether my lover's improper appearance was seen

by another man. A mans .... eyes should be crushed, don't you agree?] (TL: Written Tennokawa, read as Amanogawa. This took me some time. Maybe i should write down their surnames or something....)

[What's with that "common sense?". Don't demand for an agreement in that tone. I almost became blind. In the first place, how can you tell the fake apart? Setting aside the real thing, when i think about how i tasted the pain because of the impostor..... I'm really angry.]

[You are foolish. Comparing your eyesight with Yue's half-nakedness..... is like putting a stone from the roadside with a high-class jewel on a scale.]

[My eyes aren't roadside stones!]

Kouki objects to Hajime and shows resentment towards him, while Hajime wards of his remark, he goes back to his search.

While not taking notice of the other party, Kouki begins to get even more irritated. Shizuku and Suzu try to soothe the situation. In a certain meaning, they were indebted to a familiar girl. It was an unpleasant common point.

At that time Hajime caught a presence with his "Sign perception". It will come at the speed of a small run.

Judging from the feeling of the sign, it seemed not to be a very powerful enemy. Therefore, Hajime looked back at the sea of trees with a doubtful look.

Shia also tilted her neck while gazing at the depths of the sea of trees.

Kouki also guessed that something approached them while looking at the manner of the two. It was a creature that resembled a goblin, while it made a rustling sounds (TL: "gasagasa" sounds). It had a dark skin with an ugly and distorted face, it wore a rag and was about 140 centimeters tall.

The goblin made a "Guga"-sound when it saw Hajimes appearance. Thought it cried with a somewhat excited voice, it movements stopped as it was startled by its own voice. It stopped and looked at Hajime. Because

of its face, murderous intent was released.

In fact, it looked that way to Kouki.

Because he was not playing an active part in battle a feeling of irritation was felt by him and he made a rush to the goblin. He closed in the distance in the blink of an eye with his Holy Sword in hand.

However, the goblin which life was almost nearly cut, for a moment, it's glance turned to Kouki, but it still did not show any behavior of taking a defensive action.

In an instant, even if Kouki had some doubts about it, he swung his Holy Sword down, because you couldn't be careless against demons in the great labyrinth.

At that moment, when the Holy Sword cladded in light, almost cut the strange goblin in two,

[What are you doing, idiot!] (TL: "Boke~", not "baka")

[Nnabbubera?]

Hajime who caught up in a moment, kicked Kouki away with a "Rolling Savate". A strange scream was raised and Kouki disappeared in the interior of the sea of trees, as if being run over by a dump truck.

Despite the demon before them, Shizuku was dumbfounded by the action of an ally getting blown away by a "Rolling Savate". She couldn't overlook the action, lifted her eyes in anger and rushed over to Hajime.

[Wait a moment, Nagumo-kun! What was that for!? No matter how you look at it, it was unreasonable. Kouki merely wanted to defeat the demon!]

[That's right! Or rather, is Kouki-kun alright? We must go look for him immediately.]

Shizuku and Suzu turned a look of criticism to Hajime. Shia and Kaori also did not understand the reason for Hajime's action.

However, Hajime did not hear their voices, he only gazed at the goblin in front of him.

In her eyes, Kouki was kicked away by Hajime's "Rolling Savate" without reason and Shizuku put herself on guard against the existence of the goblin.

Kouki turned up from the back of the sea of trees while rubbing his arm. Apparently, he seemed to have been alright. However, it seemed he was going to jump at Hajime, while anger was omitting from his whole body.

[..... Nagumo. Why did you do that? Why did you get in my way? The situation is different from a while ago. Don't make excuses. To protect a demon, are you sane?]

[It's not a demon.]

[What did you say?]

Without reacting to Kouki's anger and ignoring his muttering, he kneeled in front the still standing goblin. All members were astonished by the action and are doubting him more and more. Only Shia noticed something and muttered [No way....].

Hajime, who is meeting it's eyes on the same level, says some words that startle the others.

[..... You are Yue, right?]

[Gugya!]

[[[....What the?]]]

While Kouki and the rest were standing there with open mouths, Hajime did not hesitate and took the goblins hand and muttered [Yue...]. The goblin, with a joyful cry, answered [Gugya.].

[Ehm, Hajime-san. I would never have imaged it would be Yue-san. Uhm, I can only see a demon....]

[I, I can only see a demon. Is it really Yue?]

Shia and Kaori raised a voice of doubt, while looking at the goblin in front of them. The goblin begins to cry out/complain to Hajime with [Gugya , Gugogo, Gyaagya], while looking at both of them. It shoulders

dropped, because it is not able to talk with them.

However, Hajime is there. There is nothing impossible for the man who loves Yue.

[Yes?, Yes~ The next thing you knew is that your appearance changed after the transfer?]

[! Gugya ! ..... Gugogo]

[Fumu, So it only changed the body.....]

[Gugya ..... Gyagya , Gugi]

[The equipment was also lost?....Oh, you came after the markings i have left?] (TL: Either equipment or accessories and “makingu” is written in “english”)

[Gugutsu ..... Gogagoga]

[That’s right, Hajime is where the explosions come from? Well, you aren’t wrong.....]

[.....Gyuuu, Gogo]

[Is that so, you aren’t able to use magic..... But, you don’t feel any other changes.]

[Gigigi , Gagi]

[Well, it should be alright. It’s probably one of the trials. It was an inevitable start of the game]

[..... Gyuuu]

[And Tio and Sakagami weren’t with you. Perhaps the same happened with them as with Yue. I still don’t know anything about the demons here..... Well, Don’t worry about it Yue. I’ll do something about it as always.]

A normal conversation has been established. (TL: “normal”)

[[[[[.....]]]]]

Kouki and the rest were speechless. Hajime didn’t try to hide the fact

that he was happy to be reunited with his lover and smiled.

[This kind of thing. Let's try "Reproduction Magic" out.]

[[[[[No, no, no, no, wait, wait, wait, wait]]]]]

[Oh, What's wrong?]

Kouki and the rest tsukkomied in a beautiful harmony and looked at Hajime with puzzled expressions. Everyone wanted to tsukkomi Hajime even more. Or rather, they weren't able to hold out any longer.

[Isn't it strange? It is strange, right? How can you communicate? Like nothing is going on!]

[Nothing is going on.... I talk because it is Yue?]

[Suzu only hears "Gugya"! No other words! How do you understand it?]

[No, with feelings... it is possible to talk with eyes.]

[Which reminds me, you always stare at each other.....It really is useful at such a time..... How the two of you communicate breaks through the center of the universe.]

[No, It's normal for a lover.]

[It's not normal? Obviously it is not normal.....What should we do. The "special" seat feels very far away.]

[Rather, Nagumo-kun. How did you notice it? Did you notice it before kicking me?]

[How did i, you know..... It's a simple story.]

Many tsukkomis were made and the others had tired expressions because Hajime answered with his common sense. At the end, Kouki uttered a question towards Hajime, who looked peacefully at the goblin shaped Yue,

[It's just that.... Her appearance may have changed, but i will never lose sight of Yue.]

[[[[[.....Is that so?]]]]]

[..... Gugya]

With an expression that seemed like it was made of sugar, Yue (goblin Ver.) answered happily to Kouki's group.

[Putting that aside. Kaori, I leave the "Reproduction Magic" to you.]

[Ah, Un, I understand..... Well then, here we go Yue: "Absolute Imitation"!]

Kaori, whose eyes slightly regained sanity, was appealed by Hajime, turned towards Yue (goblin Ver.) and used "Reproduction Magic". Needless to say, reproduction magic is an age of gods magic and the effects are enormous. Hajime's group thought it would return her to her old appearance if they used it.....

[Gugya?]

[What? Why? One more time: "Absolute Imitation"!]

Yue's appearance did not change back.

It's like the "Reproduction Magic" isn't activating. A silver light pours down over Yue, but Kaori's magic is erased with a crunching sound. There is still no sigh of Yue's appearance turning back.

[Why.....]

[Gugya.....]

Kaori is stunned and Yue (goblin Ver.) dejectedly drops her shoulders. Even the other members had worried expressions. In the middle of it, Hajime folded his arms and hit the temple while brooding over the phenomenon.

Hajime wore a difficult expression. Yue (goblin Vers.), while gripping the bottom of his clothes, looked up to him with an uneasy expression. She though that it would be also difficult for her to turn someone back with "Reproduction Magic".

To such a Yue (goblin Ver.), Hajime returned from his deep thoughts and turned a vibrant smile towards her.

[Everything is alright, Yue. I've said it before, we fell into the trap, but a Game Over is impossible at the start. There must be a method to turn you back. I believe the "Reproduction Magic" doesn't work because the quality of the age of gods magic is different. A special method needs to be used. It is a self-evident truth, that the challengers of the trial have "Reproduction Magic". There would be no meaning to the trial otherwise. In any case, we will find the method to turn you back if we proceed further.]

[..... Gugya]

[Aa, don't worry about it. And, i forgot about this. Can you hold this?]

[..... Gigi?]

Hajime passed Yue (goblin Ver.) a pair of jewel earrings. Because she transformed and can't use magic, he guessed that she needs something and gave her an artifact —— "Telephatic Jewels". (TL: actually stones, but they are earrings, so i choose "Jewels" instead of stones.)

[.....Hajime?, Hajime? Can you hear me?]

Then, a lovely voice affected the space, the same way as Tio's transformation into a dragon does. Hajime's expression loosed up and he looked very happy while hearing a dear and nostalgic voice, even if it was only for a moment.

[Yeah, I can hear you, Yue. Your appearance changed..... but i'm glad you are alight.]

[..... Nn. I knew Hajime would notice it.]

[That's natural. I'm the one who understands you the most.] (TL: Missed this line, i'm sorry~ Did not notice till now)

[..... Nn. But i was happy. I love you.]

[.....Stop it. It's embarrassing.]

[..... Fufu]

The air around them became sweet and pink, even though she was a goblin. Even if the appearance changed, they still create their own world.

The eyes of the other members became like ones from dead fish.

[*Cough*! Isn't it about time? Yue, I'm glad you are alright.]

[N..... Kaori, too]

[Yue-san..... Zettai, zee~~tai! We will turn you back! For that reason, you can rely on me!] (TL: "Zettai" means "absolutely" ,left it in japanese, because reasons.....)

[..... Shia, Thank you. I can't fight now, so i'll count on you.]

Shia and Kaori somehow regained their spirit and were able to exchange words with Yue.

[Yue-san, well, i'm sorry about a while ago. I didn't notice it was you.... I almost injured you.]

[....Don't worry. It was inevitable. And i believed i wouldn't get injured....]

[Eeh, is it about me?]

[.... Even from the hero (lol), Hajime would protect me.]

[..... Is that so.]

Yue's casual remark performs a clean hit. While withdrawing dejectedly, Kouki raised a dry laughter. Shizuku and Suzu try to encourage him.

[Well then, to change Yue back and find Tio and Sakagami we should push forward and quickly conquer the labyrinth.]

With Hajime's command the party proceeded to advance in the sea of trees once again.

〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜〜

[.....Hajime-san, even I see it. That is Tio.]

[I also understand it. No matter how you look at it, that is Tio.]

[....Rather, it would be a serious matter if it wasn't Tio.]

[Unmistakable, That is Tio.]

Hajime and the others turn their eyes towards the filth they see.

After 30 minutes they joined up with Yue, they saw a group of goblins. The group assaulted one goblin with kicks and punches.

However, there was no intention of killing it and an atmosphere like bullying was there. The goblin seemed not to be injured while receiving an assault from the group.

If it was only that it was bullied because it was weak, it would be pretty natural……

[No matter how i see it….. It's in ecstasy…..]

[Even though it has the face of a goblin….. We could never broadcast that.]

[Nagumo….. You, to that kind of person…. I don't feel like i could win it's heart.]

[Stop it, Amanogawa. I feel bad because i allowed that transformation…..I can only give up…..]

The goblin was floating in ecstasy, while the others where muttering. The appearance was reminiscent of a certain pervert. Or precisely, there could only be one such person.

[Tio… You are….. It's too late already…. Let's give up though it is regrettable.]

When Hajime shaked his head in a sad expression he quietly turned his back. Yue and the rest followed him without any hesitation. Normally, Kouki would say [Never desert a nakama!], among other things, but now his gaze is wandering. (TL: As in ignoring it and it is "nakama", which can mean friend, companion, comrade..etc.)

[Gu? Gyagya!]

And, at that moment, the goblin noticed Hajime's group and raised its voice.

As a result, the assaulted goblin seemed to notice Hajime. It opened its eyes wide and rushed towards Hajime, despite receiving an assault earlier.

The goblin (Tio) was crawling in a high-speed on the ground, while the other goblins instinctively pulled away and backed away. In fact, while the goblins tormented and bullied it in high spirit, they felt [Huh? Somehow you are strange.] and now they were convinced about it.

[Gugyagyagya!!]

Meanwhile, the goblin (Tio) tried to jump with a rupaodive into Hajime's chest. Though they can't understand goblin words, seen that, it was surely [Master~ This one longed to see you] or something along those lines. (TL: Forgot to mention. It's probably "scuba dive", i don't understand the censor of the author here so i left it~)

Of course, Hajime responded and said,

[Don't come near me, you pervert!]

Mekyo!

And he used an uppercut with his artificial arm.

The goblin (Tio) made an artistic backflip with four and a half turns, but did make a sound like it should have been. She crashed.

[.....Dead?]

Yue (goblin Ver.) peeked into the bush where the body of the goblin (Tio) fell. It's tail was pierced by a tree branch.

Then, [Bikunbikun]! The body of the goblin (Tio) was twitching, while regaining consciousness. Though the body is that of a goblin, the endurance may be that of a dragon. Or, she became an even bigger pervert.....

[GaGaGa! GoGo, Guge! Guga!]

The goblin (Tio) held her cheeks with both hands and screamed excited, while her body twisted around. And then, she began looking at Hajime with feverish eyes.

Instinctively, Hajime starts pulling out "Donner" and Shia desperately tries to calm him. Kaori handed over a "Telepathic Stone" over to the goblin (Tio).

[Uh-huh, a “Telepathic Stone”..... Do thou hear me, Master? This one met the beloved Master and the first words and actions were those of abuse.]

[Damn it. Even if the body changes, the toughness does not. It should just die already.]

[Tsu! Aah? Beloved Master. The lack of pardon, this one can’t hold out. Mistress is useless without Master. Now, Master’s beloved servant has returned. It’s good how the mistress, who is reduced to ugliness, is attacked without restraint!]

Apparently, even if she changed into a goblin, she still felt the pleasure. It was already too late as Hajime said.

The goblins, while ignoring Tio who is lying on the ground saying [Do as you like! Burn or boil me!] and still twitching, were insta-killed by Hajime. And the search was resumed in silence.

The other members also did not seem to care about it and follow Hajime without turning their eyes.

[Ho, is this neglect play? Master can’t be helped~ Ey, don’t leave this one behind!? This one wants you to wait~ This one is still shaking because of the blow a while ago~]

Tio’s voices echoes empty in the sea of trees. However, nobody stopped walking.

(TL: I used “it” rather than really translating it to english because i guess it makes more sense calling her an “object” rather than a “person”.)

～～～～～～～～～～～～～～～～～～

The huge branch bends and attacks irregularly like a whip. Leaves dance like a blade and scatter around. Tree nuts are shot like cannonballs. A sudden spear-like root dashes out from the ground like the sharp point of a sword. Each of these attacks are fatal.

It is very similar to the Tree-Demon Hajime once fought in the [Orcus great Labyrinth]. The demon is a so-called “Trent”. But then, when

Hajime compared this Trent with the one he fought, the size is extremely different. It was 30 meters high and 10 meters in diameter.

Kouki, Shizuku, Suzu and the ogre-like creature are confronting the huge Trent.

[Guraaa!]

Meanwhile, while raising a shout like a real Ogre, it is Ryutaro who attacks with his fist to intercept the branches that come in.

Along the way, an Ogre was discovered fighting other Ogres. However, while the fight went on martial arts were seen – To be frank, it made refined karatemovements. It was obvious that it was Ryutaro.

Ryutaro might have been dead if they found him later as his status has fallen as Yue's and Tio's did. To go that far without running away, a tsukkomi was made about his muscle-brain.

And, Ryutaro finally joined with them as the last member. They reached the place with the gigantic tree which was obviously on a different size compared with the surrounding ones..... The gigantic tree said [Defeat me if you want to go further!] and began to rage as it said it.

At the present time, Kouki's group which did not show any results till now said [We will defeat this guy!] and rushed out. Hajime's group didn't care and started to spectate the fight. By the way, Kaori is participating as a healer.

[Gwuuuu. The attack is heavy.]

A branch with the thickness of a log approaches, while cutting through the wind, and is received by Kouki with his Holy Sword. However, a groan leaked from the space of gritted teeth, while reminding how excessive the weight of the attack was.

Shizuku is busy with shuriken like leaves, which fly like throwing knifes. Suzu puts up a powerful barrier to somehow intercept the attack and Kouki desperately decides to use the opening to attack.

[Kuu, No good. Because Kaori is here, we do not have to worry about not

being able to continue……]

The black katana “Tsumehirameki” was fully taken advantage of. Shizuku gridded her teeth while cutting branches and leaves one by one. (TL: Not sure 爪閃, something like claw flash/lighting)

Hajime’s words before entering the great labyrinth, sank into the bodies of Shizuku’s group. Without Hajime they would have been annihilated already. The confidence they gained in the [Orcus great Labyrinth] was crushed into pieces.

After worrying a little, Shizuku shouted towards Kouki.

[Kouki! Use “Supreme Destruction”!] (TL: 神威 not too sure, used chapter 122 as a reference)

[No, it’s not good. The chant is too long!]

[It’s alright! We will defend you without fail! Believe in us!]

Kouki was troubled what he should do about Shizuku’s suggestion.

It was obvious that the Trent before them was stronger than the demons of the woman of the Majin-tribe (TL: Demon-tribe). The attacks only come one by one, however the fight is only somewhat manageable with Kaori’s backup. They could lose their lives if they lose concentration even once. It would take more than an average nerve to expose oneself defenseless in such a time.

However, it was certain that without an overwhelming attack they can’t reach the Trent. At this rate, they wouldn’t be able to defeat it.

In addition……

Kouki recalls the time when Hajime met Yue again. A mutual trust that did not change, even when the appearance changed. Hajime saw the true nature of his lover in an instant and Yue did not show any unrest while she was almost killed by Kouki. Honestly, it would be a lie so say that he did not envy such a relationship.

Therefore, Kouki was determined. We have a relationship of mutual trust. It was absolutely not to prove that they will not lose to Hajime.

[I understand. I leave my back to you!]

[Yes, leave it to us. Ryutaro, Suzu! Let's gather up!]

[Roger!]

[Aye yo!]

Kouki did not move an inch while raising his Holy Sword over his head. Only his mouth moved while chanting. That state may be called defenseless, because his whole consciousness was poured into the chant of "Might of Heaven".

The Trent was sure not to miss that chance. The tree branches from right and left, a leaf blade which approached like a tornado from above, a shell of nuts from the front and the root of a tree attacks from the ground.

[This is sacred ground, the enemy of god will not be allowed to pass! "Absolute Virtue!"] (TL: "聖絶" not sure about this skill, also "YOU SHALL NOT PASS!" would also work, but i did not want to use a sketchy line~)

Suzu foresaw an attack and put up a barrier. Up till now her barriers have saved the party. The barrier withstood somehow the first barrage of attacks with small cracks.

[Tsuuuuu!]

Because of the consecutive attacks of the Trent, the barrier couldn't hold out and breaks. Suzu's groan resounds loudly, while Shizuku and Ryutaro (Ogre Ver.) are attacking in despair.

[Tsuuuaaa!]

[Oooooh!]

They were badly bruised in an instant because of the offensive waves of attacks. They intercept every attack with their skills, while screaming and roaring. Though two people get damaged and blood spilled out, they didn't let any attack pass to the back.

["Kaiten!"] (TL: Changing the world or turning the tide. Japanese sounds a bit better.)

With only one world echoing on the battlefield, Suzu's wounds are healed in an instant by Kaori's magic.

Though "Kaiten" is a recovery magic for multiple targets, it's effects are already above the advanced level. Most wounds are healed in no time. After getting Nointo's body, Kaori was inspired to create new healing magic. It was possible to heal with "Regeneration Magic", however the magic consumption from the age of gods magic is larger than normal magic.

Suzu puts up a barrier again and earns a few seconds, however it gets destroyed again. Shizuku and Ryutaro put their lives on the line again. Kaori immediately heals their damaged bodies and Suzu puts up another barrier. They repeat this three times.

Finally, from Kouki's body, a huge amount of magic gushes out and covers his Holy Sword. The Holy Sword is cladded in light like the sun and Kouki takes a deep breath.

And,

[————Everyone! Here i go! "Supreme Destruction" !!]

He unleashes his trump card, his strongest magic. A huge torrent of light strikes the ground and flies forward. A leaf blade is blown off, the tree branch gets eliminated, the bombardment of the nuts is swallowed and the Trent is hit directly.

The roaring sounds and light explode, while the surroundings are dyed white.

[I did it!]

Kouki gives a smile of satisfaction and shouts. Hajime watches in the back, while stuffing a small cake into his mouth, and mutters [Aah, he raised the flag.....].

The flag was certainly raised.

The light and dust clears up.....and the Trent is unhurt.

[It's a lie, right.....]

Kouki is stunned and makes a lifeless voice. It wasn't only Kouki. Shizuku's group also were shocked because Kouki's last resort was useless.

The Trent lets out murderous intent towards Kouki's group and starts attacking in waves again.

Chapter 126: The Pseudo-Trent

"Supreme Destruction" ———— Is a power like the name says. A power worthy as a hero's trump card, a magic of the highest grade. Kouki came as a beginner into this world, leveled up, gained experience and was able to slaughter all enemies with his special technique.

However, the Trent emerged unscathed from the dust.

[Impossible.....]

Kouki was unable to move because of that fact. Shizuku realized something and raises her voice.

[Kouki! Look at that! It wasn't a direct hit!]

[Eh?]

When Kouki looked into the same direction as Shizuku, he saw a large amount of trees scattered around, broken into small fragments. Apparently, Kouki's "Supreme Destruction" did not hit the Trent directly. It was prevented by a large amount of trees in the front.

Though there shouldn't be any trees there? Where on earth did such a great amount appear from? The questions from Kouki's group were answered by the Trent.

At that time, the Pseudo-Trent gave out a pale light. A large number of trees spread out from the base and grew in a very great force.

[..... Unique Magic.]

Suzu muttered. That opinion was right. It was the unique magic of the Trent of the "Sea of Trees". It was freely able to create a large amount of trees and manipulate them freely.

[This, this is bad! This is sacred ground, the enemy of god will not be allowed to pass! "Absolute Virtue!"]

Suzu was momentarily dumbfounded, but was able to invoke "Absolute Virtue" immediately. Attacks poured in from all directions, while a shining barrier was deployed with Suzu's group inside.

The branches which had a sharpened point like a spear gave an intense shock to the barrier one after another.

Not only the Trent, but also the surrounding trees also produced a similar attack. It seemed they wold get crushed to death by the almost oppressive amount of resources.

The “Absolute Virtue” won’t be able to hold out without a chant. It already cracked here and there, it did not seem to hold out for another several seconds. And, when Suzu’s barrier gets broken, will the others hold out till she deploys it again?.....Only an optimist would judge it doable.

[No good....anymore....]

Suzu realizes by the magic consumption, that the barrier will soon break and informs the others.

Kouki looks at Suzu. [Then i have to use “Limit Break” to survive!] He made his resolve. There is no choice but to accept that they need to use two of their trump cards directly at the first stage after entering a great labyrinth.

However, after guessing Kouki’s intentions, assistance came from the rear.

[“Forever Engraved”]

The reproduction magic “Forever Engraved”, which Kaori used – regardless of the substance of the object – can regenerate everything to the state one second ago every one second it is used.

Suzu’s “Absolute Virtue” which seemed to break at any moment, gets surrounded by a silver light. After one beat, the barrier recovered to its dignified appearance af if nothing happened. Even after the attacks of the Trents , it returns to its original state. “Absolute Virtue” is repaired every second.

[Wow, Kao-rin! Thank you!]

Suzu, while maintaining the barrier, looks back and thanks Kaori. Kouki

and the others slighty relax their bodies because they got of the predicament and look to the back.

There, the Trents surrounded Hajime's group like it did to Kouki's. Hajime and the others did not seem to care about it.

Four "Cross Bitts" were arranged by Hajime in the surroundings and a triangular pyramid was spread as a barrier. (TL: Like this: http://www.math-salamanders.com/images/lgs-3d-shape-triangular-based-pyramid.gif) The space interception type produce a spatial magic "Four-Point Barrier".

"Reproduction Magic" isn't even used and still there are no signs that the barrier gets shaken. It seems to be a totally impregnable castle wall, without allowing any attack to come near.

[That seems to be the limit. I thought they would hold out longer.....]

Hajime murmured while looking down at Kouku who had a complicated look.

[U~n, Wouldn't they be fine if the hero-san uses his "Limit Break"?]

[I wonder. Well, if he goes over his limit maybe..... However, what will happen after he weakens after that? It is unlikely that he can recover from the fatigue of his "Limit Break" with healing magic.]

[.....It may be possible with Reproduction Magic.]

[I don't want to use it as the magic consumption is big. It's still too early for that.]

[Fumu. Well then, we should clear up here before the hero-boy uses it.]

Hajime was wondering if Kouki and the others would be acknowledged to have cleared the great labyrinth. Kouki and the others should obtain the age of gods magic , because [If Nointos appear in a great amount we could use the "throw the heroes at them"-strategy.]

So, they should raise their military strength in the great labyrinth [Appeal with: "We should fight hard!"] Or so he wished.....

Because it is unknown what may happen beyond this point, it's not

preferable to use age of gods magic in succession because of its magic consumption. Even though they have magic stones stocked up, they don't know when Yue and Tio can turn back and are able to fight.

[Master, this one thinks you should not worry too much about the outcome of the battle.]

[Yes? What do you mean? Is it about the concept of the great labyrinth?]

The goblin (Tio) advises Hajime who thinks deeply about the current situation. Despite her being a pervert, her words and knowledge are very thoughtful. Though, she is still a helpless pervert.

[Yes. The concept is probably "testing the bonds".]

[Bond..... Speaking of it, the word was also on the stone tablet at the entrance.]

[That's right. Not only to test the bonds with the sub-humans, but also to test the bonds when capturing the labyrinth. Is it not so? See through the imitations, accept the companions which changed. It is truly testing the "deep woven bonds".]

[I see..... If there is a goal after clearing this trial you could call this a "guidepost". If it's that way, then there might be no problem if I clean up the battle. Amanokawa and the others only need to get over the "testing the bonds something" what comes after this.]

[That's right. Well, it is only a guess in the end.]

It is still a very reliable guess.

With understanding that, Hajime makes his decision and lets out a sigh. Even though he strengthened Kouki and other with the artifacts greatly, the great labyrinth reads the memory after the capture and there is a possibility it won't accept them if he makes them too strong and so he waited.

Hajime glanced at the Goblin (Tio) and lets out another sigh. Tio occasionally gives sharp consideration and makes suggestive advice

because she lived far longer than him. He's reminiscent that the race is supposed to be noble and respectful.

Originally she is thoughtful and considerate and has the perfect nature of the Dragon-Race which Yue longed for. Every man would be captured by her beauty as she's a very attractive lady.

Even though she's already a pervert.....

[Really, is it my fault?] Hajime worried in his mind. And he looks at the Goblin (Tio) and regretted it.

[Mu? Master's look of pity at this one....haa, haa, this is in itself..... already...Mistress is no good without Master.]

[Haa~]

Tios wriggling with her Goblin body gave out unpleasant feelings.

Hajime looks at the Trent which attacks without restraint but still can't tear Suzu's "Absolute Virtue" and Hajime's "4-Point-Barrier". In addition it still generates more trees. The surrounding view was already filled with trees.

[Taniguchi. I'll burn everything now. Don't undo the barrier if you don't want to die.]

[Eh?]

Hajime warns Suzu before unleashing an attack while she is defending from attacks from all directions.

Suzu suddenly answers dumbfounded with a great voice. Kouki and the other turn dubious expressions towards Suzu. The expressions will soon turn into dumbfounded ones.

Outside of the barrier, Hajime throws a moonlike-ring (Getsurin) into the air and takes out a remote control with an induction stone out of the "Treasure Box". With the power of "Wind Claw" and "Sign Perception" the surrounding trees were easily dissected and thrown into the air. (TL: Actually the author has written "sky", but i choose to change it to "air". Makes somehow more sense. I'll use "Getsurin" from now on, just needed

to explain what it is.)

The numbers exceeded 20. It's impossible to make them get battle mobility, but it's easy to change the tide.

And in the next moment, black liquid scatters around the Trent like raid because of the Getsurin. The black liquid scattered around is a tar that burns at 3.000℃ which even melts Fullum ore.

Hajime transfers a large amount of tar stored in the "Treasure Box" by using the gate function of Getsurin.

While trying to figure out what Hajime was doing, Shia and the other let out a [Uwaa~] and their eyes turned towards Hajime.

Certainly, it was effective to deal with the Trent and all the trees it quickly generated.....

While the girls gazed at Hajime, he threw a small live coal towards Getsurin.

In that moment,

Gooooooooo !! (TL: Not sure how to translate sound effects ゴォオオオオオオ！！)

Everything in sight was dyed instantly in flaming red.

The Trents, which didn't even worry when the tar was released, are now surrounded by a prison of flames of 3,000℃ and instantaneously burned by it. Though they don't have vocal cords, it seems they are screaming in agony.

The spectacle may be mistaken for hell which has manifested on this world. Now, every object outside of the barrier is certainly carbonized..... No, even cinders might not remain.

The tar does not burn for long, but the heat is terrific. The hellfire produced by Hajime extinguished naturally after 15 minutes. However, because the Trents ran wild, it even spread to normal trees, so Kaori managed somehow to extinguish the flames with water magic.

[We joined up with Yue and the other already, so i had no problems

burning everything down....]

[Hajime-kun.... Do you even think before destroying everything?]

[Where Hajime-san is, there is also destruction.... Father and the others might think of two new names if they see it.]

[.....Hajime not restraining himself....Wonderful.]

[This one agrees, Yue. Merciless Master.... This one gets wet.]

Hajime releases the "4-Point-Barrier" and walks toward Kouki and the others who have somewhat tired expressions, while Kaori turns to Hajime looking troubled. The members other than Kaori are saying [That's very Hajime-like.] and [As expected from Hajime.]. With satisfaction on her face she nods in agreement.

[Nagumo-kun....A little while ago.... No, it's nothing. A rocket launcher has already been fired at random and cluster bombs were scattered around. This much is already normal for him. Therefore, get a grip, myself.....]

Kouki and the others made a complicated look, as if they are really safe. At the same time, Kouki glanced towards Hajime and bits his lips tightly.

Kouki wasn't able to knock it down even with his last resort and Hajime did it as if it was a side-job. Even if he was persuaded to come here to obtain the age of gods magic, will he really obtain it while being helped.....? Such uneasiness was welling up in his mind.

Kouki averts his glance from Hajime and tries to shake off his negative thoughts and looked back in panic as he heard "Mekimeki"-sounds from behind.

[Did it regenerate?]

Like Kouki said, a big tree grew rapidly from the carbonized ground while rumbling the earth.The Trent grew in no time. Exactly how a "Regeneration" would feel like.

Kouki and the others took a stance, however the regenerated Trent showed no signs of attacking. After standing for a while it started to make

a cave. The trunk tears open, the left and right side crack and an open space in the middle is created.

[I thought it was a middle-boss, but it was also the door which goes to the next stage.]

Hajime advanced towards the cave without nodding or hesitating as he was convinced. Yue and the others follow him. Kouki and the others who assumed a stance, followed him in a hurry.

The inside of the cave was without any special characteristics. However, after everybody entered it, the entrance in the cave shut them in and their feet began to shine at the same time.

[Another teleportation.....]

It was the same magic as the one at the entrance of the great Tree. Hajime strongly drew the Goblin (Yue) and the Goblin (Tio) towards him while muttering.

Because those two can't fight right now, even a trivial thing would be fatal. He wants to do something, even if it's a trifle thing. After coming this far, it's impossible to lose these two.

[.....Hajime.]

[Ma, Master.... Uu, this one is troubled by your gentleness.]

Were Hajime's worries transmitted to them? It looked more like the two goblins were really happy, rather than being scared of the transportation. Tio showed a very uncommon embarrassed (dere) side.

Shia and Kaori jumped towards Hajime with the words [Ah, me too~] and wanted to hug him.....

However, the attempt was one step too slow. As for Hajime's view, the scene where two people stretched out a hand was painted out with enormous light at the end.

Chapter 127: Ideal World

Chrip, Chirp, Chirp

The singing of birds and sunlight invading in the space of the curtain informs that morning has come. Responding to the sound, the master of the room covers his head in his futon (TL: Japanese bed) and it turns into an impregnable fortress.

And in the next moment a click resounds plainly and the devil raised a roar. (TL: Alarm clock = devil. I understand, same for me~ Die alarm clocks. Every one of them should be killed by a hero.)

Jiriririririri !! (TL: Strange alarm. Well.... Could be worse.....)

A noise destroys the silence of the morning in the room [Wake up, boke!]

[Uuu.....]

The master of the room tries to protect himself from the devil in his fortress, but it's impossible to do that forever. He extended his arm from the futon and in an instant "Banban"! The palm looks for the devil and hits it.

The head of the devil is caught at the third time by the arm because of the experience of the devil subjugation for 10 years and he succeeded in silencing the screaming.

However, the act that has continued on countless occasions wasn't hard work at all. The arm of the master of the room dropped in exhaustion and was withdrawn straight into the fortress again. And he stopped moving after that.

Immediately after that,

[Hajime~ Wake uuuuup!! Don't go back to sleep ! Wake up already~!]

A familiar voice is heard from downstairs —— The voice of a mother is demanding to wake up. The master of the room, Hajime, has certainly heard the voice in his half consciousness. [Resistance to the bitter end!]

The defence of the fortress is gets even stronger after saying that.

[No good after all~. Mou, now really, every morning. Sorry~ Can i count on you again?]

[——] (TL: Really. They were that way. I only changed the brackets. Don't look at me that way. I'll get aroused.)

The voice of the mother is heard again from downstairs. It reached Hajime's ears because it was spoken loud on purpose so that Hajime hears it even if it was on the other side of the door.

Not thinking of the voice of the mother which has given up, already knowing who she's talking with and what will happen, Hajime still had no intention to get up obediently.

After all, every morning is a happy morning for Hajime……

A "konkon"-knocking sound echoes.

However, because there is no reaction, the person understood the reason for it and opened the door immediately. The person calls out to the dumpling gently while getting closer to the bed with small steps.

[…… Wake up, Hajime.]

[……]

Still, no reaction. A little more, he wants to hear voice more till he fully awakes.

[……Hajime, wake up. If you don't wake up……]

[……]

She gently uses her hand shaking him. A small hand can be seen over the futon and Hajime's cheeks begin to soften.

[….I'll attack you. Sexually.]

[Un, I'll wake up, so will you stop saying such a vivid thing in the morning?]

He wakes up immediately after feeling chills down his spine! And the futon was pushed aside. (TL: I don't really understand why the author

used an “!” here. I let it inside, but it feels strange.)

[Morning, Yue.]

[……N. Morning, Hajime.]

Hajime smiled for a while with his dear lover and savored the first happiness of the day.

Hajime is walking to school while suppressing a yawn. Yue is besides him and looks upwards towards him. Such a gesture can only be called cute….. Hajime is looking at Yue while they are going besides each other and is busy restraining himself.

Yue is wearing a blazer from Hajimes school. Her short skirt is fluttering gently while she goes backwards, turns her head towards Hajime and speaks to him.

[……..Again, staying up late?]

[Un, I was doing the work father asked me to. It was morning before i noticed.]

[……..It’s good to be enthusiastic, but take care of yourself. Please don’t overwork yourself.]

[Un, I’ll be careful.]

Hajime and Yue are having a gentle conversation. They create a sweet atmosphere between them. A long time passed since Yue became Hajimes lover, however, the passion between them has not declined at all. For Yue to be near Hajime, the homestay was forced into Hajimes house and the transfer procedure to his school was finished very quickly.

Suddenly, the pretty girl with blonde hair became Hajime’s lover and it became a fuss at the beginning. After all, Hajime is a genuine Otaku that spends most of his time helping his father who manages a game company. It’s unimaginable why Hajime got such a beautiful lover.

His mother doubted it and panicked because she thought it was because of hypnotism and his father thought he had the ability to make delusions real. Even at school, after it was revealed that Yue was Hajime’s lover, it

became the hottest topic of the whole school.

Afterwards, it is needless to say that the boys were envious of Hajime. Yue is like Yue is, she was waging war with several girls for some reason. (TL: Wait what? Why?)

Such things continued for several months. It stopped only recently and their school life calmed down. Thus, because they overcame the storm, they can now leisurely stroll to school together.

Hajime, while looking at Yue and her blonde hair which reflects the light and shines brightly, tried to recall how they have met.

By chance, he helped Yue who was caught by some thugs and in a desperate fight he somehow manage to defeat one and rescued her. His face becomes hot when he recalls that she kissed his neck as gratitude towards him. After that they became lovers very fast. (TL: Author used “rapidly”, but that sounds somewhat strange.)

(However, even thought i am an Otaku i managed to beat them. Humans can somehow manage it when they are desperate.)

Hajime smiles involuntarily, remembers his act of rashness, but somehow feels uneasy.

(……Huh? Where did i meat Yue again? Why was I at such a place? Huh?)

It’s obvious that Yue is a foreigner and became a homestay student. That means he should have met her in a foreign country. Hajime himself remembers that he met Yue in a foreign country.

However, where was that actually? He wasn’t sure and his thoughts were hazy. As soon as he noticed that, those doubts came battered like being spilled from a bookshelf in his memory. The uneasiness and doubts swelled up in Hajime one after another.

[….Hajime!]

[Uwa, what happened? Why did you shout out so suddenly. You surprised me.]

Yue normally never talks in such a loud voice while commuting to school. Hajime's hearth almost jumped and he came back to reality from his whirlpool of thoughts.

After that, Hajime looks at Yue who has a somewhat sulky expression.

[.....Because you ignored me many times when i called you.]

[What? Really? Sorry! I was thinking for a moment.....]

Yue turns around suddenly in a bad mood. She was sulking and Hajime's eyebrows turned into the letter of eight. (TL: "八") At that time, Hajime's doubts disappeared completely.

Yue shows a mischievous smile and Hajime repeatedly apologizes. She did not sulk at all, she only wanted Hajime to care about her. She was happy that her plan succeeded.

To such a Yue, Hajime lowers his eyebrows to the character of eight again [Can't do anything about this girlfriend] and he wears a troubled look on his face with a smile. However, he wasn't really troubled like his expression looked like. He was rather happy.

While doing a brilliant turn towards Hajime again, Yue lines up next to Hajime and says something with a small voice.

[.....Doze off. In happiness. Look only at me.]

That voice did not reach Hajime. While Hajime looked at Yue who snuggled up to him, his eyes gently softened.

When Hajime arrived at the school and was changing his shoes at the shoe cabinet, a soft impact is transmitted to his back. It was certain that someone bumped into him and it was a happy feeling for any man. (TL: Come on! Oppai attack! The attack was very effective!)

[Hajime-san~! Yue-san~! Good morning!]

[n..... Good morning, Shia.]

[Uwa, Shia-san ! Let me go! I always tell you to stop hugging me when you greet me.] (TL: Wtf Hajime? Shia-san? Is your head alright? I guess not....)

[To take away my happiness..... This is cruel! At this point you should take responsibility and marry me!]

[You skipped some steps! Anyway, let go! Highlight is disappearing from Yue's pupils. She stares without blinking!] (TL: Author has written "highlight" so I left it. This does sound strange in english. Think of her eyes looking dead or something.)

As for Hajime, he tries to tear of Shia from his back while not being too happy about the feeling on his back.

Shia is also a foreigner like Yue and came to japan to study abroad. Also by chance, he helped her and her family who were attacked by a thug and she repeats to show gratitude with repeating extreme physical contact.

The trademark headband (▪▪▪▪▪▪) she's wearing is shining in a blue color in addition to her white hair and her innocent smile she is popular regardless of gender and she also has a fan club.

Honestly, I am happy that such a girl is showing me goodwill, even though i am confused. It isn't so that i don't think of what would have happened if i had not met Yue earlier than her.

However, there is no meaning in thinking about such IFs. With Yue as the best lover, Shia's aggressiveness is becoming a headache for Hajime.

Though Shia's goodwill which she turn to Hajime with her excessive physical contact makes Yue have a bad mood, they get along well and they may be called best friends.

That way, they aren't able to be unkind to each other, and somehow they are stuck in a dilemma. Even though Yue wants to monopolize Hajime, she shows no signs to ditch Shia, her best friend. To Hajime is their relationship mysterious.

(Good grief, saving two girls from delinquents and receiving their goodwill. Which Gal-game is this? Moreover, a harem-route to be OK is realistically impossible. ..... What? Come to think of it, was Shia always wearing such a headband? Somehow, more, like, a different feeling.....)

While Hajime watched Shia's headband and searching his memory,

suddenly both his arm were wrapped in a happy feeling.

While pressing such heinous fruits (deadly weapons) against Hajime while talking, they pulled him towards the classroom. (TL: No joke intended. He really has written “brutal/fiendish/heinous/evil fruits” 凶悪な果実)

[Why do you make such a difficult face in the morning? If we don’t go to class soon the first bell will ring.]

[n....The teacher will scold us.]

Warm sunlight is entering from the window and raises the temperature gradually, however because of two people it becomes midwinter in the blink of an eye.

Hajime is paying attention to not spend too much time with those two at school. From the mouths of those two the words “classroom”, “first bell” and “teacher” escaped. So he had no choice and felt a discomfort in his chest.

When he entered the classroom, in that moment, the looks of envy and jealousy were emitted from the men and stick all to Hajime. Because of Yue’s and Shia’s aid he doesn’t get chased directly, their piercing gazes still hurt.....

(N? What is it? How to call this..... nostalgic? Huh, why, Why do i feel that way?)

Hajime couldn’t understand his own feeling and sat down on his seat while twisting his neck and being even more confused.

Immediatly after that, one girl from the class approaches Hajime.

[Hajime-kun, Good Morning. You came at the last-minute today. You should come earlier.]

[.....]

The girl – Shirasaki Kaori – who greeted him is not inferior to Yue or Shia even if you compare them. She was the School Madonna before Yue and Shia came. Also, she is also a girl who favors Hajime for some reason.

She has called out to Hajime often already before, but he did not think it was because she had courtesy for him. However, because Yue named herself as Hajimes lover, Kaori started to make her goodwill shown towards Hajime as she knew she had feelings for him. Because of that it was impossible to run away from misunderstandings.

Kaori came closer to Hajime with “patapata” steps which sounded happy and Hajime showed a troubled smile……This time however, because Hajime was caught in his thoughts he didn’t answer Kaori.

(That line…..somewhere….Damn it, What is it? Why did i think of that as “nostalgic”? Though it is the usual…. Today is somewhat strange.)

[Hajime-kun…. Why do you ignore me? Well… Have I made you angry somehow?]

When hearing the trembling voice, Hajime looks up and sees Kaori with a tearful expression. Hajime noticed that he had been ignoring Kaori’s greeting and answered in a hurry.

[No, sorry. That’s not it. I was thinking for a moment. I’m really sorry. Morning, Shirasaki-san.]

[Oh, i’m glad~ . Un, Morning Hajime-kun. And don’t i always tell you i want you to call me “Kaori”?]

Kaori puffs out her cheecks and shows her dissatisfaction. Because of such a lovely gesture, all the young men that looked at Hajime were almost all shot. (TL: Cuteness overload.)

[No, Shirasaki-san. That’s a bit….]

[It’s Kaori. Call me that?]

[No, that’s…..]

[Ka-o-ri!]

[That, err, Ka, Kao…..]

Muu! Hajime is overwhelmed by Kaori as she wants him to call her by her given name. And when he was almost persuaded to do so,

[.....Don't trouble Hajime.]

The savior appeared. It was Yue.

Yue protected Hajime and cut in between Hajime and Kaori with an imposed stance.

[Muu, you came out, Yue. For the time being, Morning.]

[.....n, for now, Morning. Kaori.]

While Yue and Kaori greet each other, an icy enviroment between them is created. They officially recognize each other as rivals in school.

Warm sunlight enters from the window and it becomes warmer, however between those two, it becomes midwinter suddenly. "Cold War" —— The battle over Hajime between Yue and Kaori is known not only by the students, but also by the teachers.

Though those two stare at each other for a while, there is no malicious feeling there. In spite of the war of love between them, those two, in a dignified manner, collide with each other openly.

For Hajime it wasn't too strange, rather than rivals, they were like close friends which did not hate each other, but had a quarrel like friends.

Meanwhile the bell rang, and the head teacher entered the classroom. Yue and Kaori who had been exchanging glances returned to their seats quickly.

In the first period was the english class from Tio-sensei. A beauty that for some reason likes Hajime. She is an erotic female teacher that always without exception sexually harasses Hajime.....

Immediately make some disciplinary dismissals! While thinking that, he glares at her while neglecting the harassment and she stops immediately her sexual harassment. For some reason, she tries to hide her expression which is red and her shoulders shake..... Hajime got depressed because he thought she was scared of his face. (TL: Tio stays Tio, wherever she is....)

After school, Hajime and Yue were walking besides each other towards

a certain place. Shia, Kaori and for some reason Tio-sensei wanted to come with them, but Yue cut them down with a single strike of a sword. (Of course, only in a mental meaning.) Because they were temporarily immobilized, only those two were able to go.

The place at which they arrived at while enjoying an innocent conversation was a kindergarten.

At that place, Myuu, the daughter of Remia which was mothers friend (TL: Speaks of Hajime's mother probably) was there and they came for her because Remia was busy. And this picking-up, until Remia comes back, became the daily life of Hajime's family which continues since long ago.

[Aa Pa..... Onii-chan! Yue-neechan!] (TL: She almost said almost "papa". I want to take her home. Onii-chan = brother, Neechan = sister, most will know. Just in case)

Hajime and Yue went through the front gate of the of the kindergarten and Myuu came running to them with small steps. She was smiling with her whole face. Unconsciously, Hajime and Yue had a warm and fluffy feeling. The two catch Myuu which rushed to them and embraced her with a "gyu".

[Myuu, it's no good to dive/jump into us. It's dangerous you know? Also, did you just try to call me "Papa"? Really, don't do that.]

[.....I wouldn't mind being called "Mama".]

Hajime almost break out in cold sweat because of how Myuu wanted to call him.

Myuu called Hajime "Papa" before and it became a hassle as other parents also were there. Remia was a widow, Myuu didn't know her father and they thought that the gentle older man, Hajime, was her father.

However, calling Hajime, an active high school student, "Papa"..... Naturally, some rumors were spread.

Moreover, Yue is also a foreigner the same as Myuu is. It should be understood what the other parents were imagining. Namely, they thought

she got pregnant somewhere between primary school and middle school!

When Yue heard about the misunderstanding, the misunderstanding escalated further as she only blushed without denying it. Yue imagined making a child with Hajime, but the timing for that was just too bad.

In one way or another, the teachers of the kindergarten solved the misunderstandings. On a later date, Remia has written a letter so that the misunderstanding doesn't spread further so that it disappears from Hajime's town. Honestly, he almost was breaking out in cold sweat.

Moreover Remia is a widow and it was possible he would aim for her next time? A lady-killer with a docile face! And most turned cautious eyes towards him. Recently, he has given up on that already. Still, more or less, he doesn't let her call him papa.

They walk with Myuu between them while holding hands home. From time to time, they swing Myuu forth and back like on a swing while chatting. If you look from the side, it completely looks like a family.

[.....Myuu, what were you doing today?]

[Ehm, today.....] (TL: E to ne, kyou wa..... KAWAI, damn it! Yes, I like Myuu. Problems with that? Long live cute things!)

Myuu answers Yue what she was doing today. While seeing such a Myuu, Yue looks at her very gently. It is full of love and warmth overflows. Somehow, Hajime has been fascinated by such a divine Yue.

It takes a while till a ill-humored voice reaches Hajime.

[Mou, pap—- Onii-chan! Do you hear what Myuu is talking about?]

[Eh? Aah, sorry, sorry. I was spacing out for a bit.]

Hajime smiles with a wry smile while apologizing to Myuu which is angry and lifts her arm. And to please her, Hajime starts to cuddle with her.

Though Myuu restores her mood very fast as she was held, she doesn't want to let go and tries very hard to still pretend to be angry at him. It was obvious for Hajime, but he pretended not to notice it and Hajime was

still soothing Myuu.

At that time, a faint quarrel finally reached their ears. A woman's voice and of some men. Judging by the voice, the female seems to be in a pinch. Hajime and Yue look at each other and peek into the alley where the voice was heard.

[What a template is this....] (TL: Probably meant stereotype, but has written template.)

[.....Enemy of women, won't be forgiven.]

Like you can imagine it, some men were trying to forcefully pick-up a girl.

Hajime twisted his head while holding Myuu and thinking what to do. The enemy's strength wasn't very big. Judging from their postures, they only seemed like small punks. It wouldn't be a big deal, even if they were armed.

Their potential was analyzed (・・・・・・・・・) and Yue on his side plunged forward to the punks.

They have turned towards Yue as they have realized that she approaches them and were momentarily stunned by her pretty face and were smiling, however immediately they smiles became vulgar. Their eyes were seeing new prey.

Because of their glances, Hajime got angry. However, before he was able to able to something, Yue got in between the pick-up guys in a moment. In addition, in only a moment, their joints made a "bekibaki" (breaking) sound and Yue got control of them immediately.

Believe it or not, the guys were beaten up without a chance to speak. They fell on the ground while screaming in pain after getting hit.

Yue didn't show any mercy and the girl's face became stiff and Yue went back to Hajime immediately. And they began walking home again. Not even three minutes had passed after the commotion. A short-term battle, that reminded of a certain space hero. (TL: Don't know the reference.)

[Yue-neechan is strong~! How coool~!]

[....N, Myuu will be trained when you grow up.]

Myuu's future is a bit worrisome. Myuu praises Yue, however Hajime feels irritated as he wasn't able to do anything as a man. Even with his troubled look, he fell in love again with his lover.

(Huh? Was Yue so strong in close combat? Moreover, why was I able to analyze their strength.....)

While holding Myuu with his right hand, Hajime unconsciously puts his other hand to his thigh. And there, his hand is searching for something. However, that "Something" is not there and he feels some kind of discomfort.

At night.

After dinner and taking a bath, Hajime threw himself onto his bed. His hair was not dry yet, and he had begun brooding over something.

He had a strange feeling. It should be his unchanging daily life.....but his instincts say something like [This is wrong!] and his happy daylie life got denied. [Wake up!] it said.

Hajime scratched his head while being irritated.

At that time, knocking-sounds unexpectedly sounds.

[.....Hajime?]

[Aa, yeah I'm here.]

Yue opened the door and entered the room.

In a negligee. White sexy arms and feet were shown. Yue came closer to Hajime and noticed that he had wet hair and scolded him! While having a scolding gaze, she arrived at his bed.

In addition, she began to dry off Hajime's hair while he was lying on the bed.

[N.....It's dry now. It's bad to leave it wet. You'll catch a cold.]

[You are right, Thank you, Yue.]

[Nn.]

Hajime was thanking her and Yue hugged him from behind.

And she buries her face in Hajime's neck like a spoiled child. Both of her arms invade Hajime's clothes from the back and start to caress Hajime's chest. After Remia picks up Myuu, Yue becomes a spoiled child.

As long as Myuu is there, they can't be spend much time as lovers, so some fault lies in that. When there are holidays, Yue is sulking pretty much as he cares for Myuu too much. It's inevitable to some degree, however her desire to monopolize him is strong.

(She is stronger than any thugs, full of love and kindness, she loves me and is the best girlfriend there is. .....I am satisfied with this everyday life. I should feel blessed. Yet.... Why am i dissatisfied) What is wrong? Why is there a "moyamoya"-feeling in my chest?)

While feeling the softness and the temperature of Yue's body, Hajime tries to ignore the uneasiness which swells up. To such a Hajime Yue whispers something to his ears.

[.....Everything is fine. Do not worry. I'll make Hajime happy.]

[Yue.....]

[.....Look only at me. Everything is fine, i am here. Hajime's ideal. Forever at your side.]

[.....]

While melting in such a sweet whispering, Hajimes consciousness began to fade. At this rate, how sweet would it be to sleep while being spoiled by Yue.

(That's right. Yue is here. There isn't anything more important. ...There shouldn't be. I don't need anything else. Even if i would need to throw everything away..... My ideal lover is besides me. Only that.....)

His consciousness is breaking off. Losing strength in his body, without change his self is being comfortable soaked in warm feelings.

Then, while all his dissatisfaction are on the verge of disappearing,

——I defend Yue, Yue defends me. With that we are the strongest. We'll defeat everything and overcome the world. (TL: He starts speaking here with "Ore" again.)

Suddenly, strange words appear in his mind. Hajime consciousness surfaces rapidly and he opens his eyes wide.

——Aa~, If you like, Yue can come too?

His voices echoes again. It was the promise of taking Yue back to his home.

Afterwards Yue smiled. They go back to his home together. While he said that she had smiled like a blooming flower. She was happy from the bottom of her hearth.

If you think of it, when Hajime saw that for the first time, he was probably done in.

Also, the oath was set on the day of departure after passing life or death situations and stepping into the world. They vow to protect each other, defeat everything that stands in their way and go to Hajime's hometown together.

His instincts tell him that. Immediately before he his consciousness fades he remembers the important oath embraces himself and "Something about seeing Yue" and stands up.

(.....Ideal Lover? Sweet, gentle world? I'm stupid (▪▪▪)!)

Hajime covered his eyes and gritted his teeth to the very limit. If he did not do so, he wouldn't be able to forgive himself. (TL: He would start crying.)

(.....I forgot the promise. Was almost blinded by this world. I'm disgusted about myself.)

Hajime hit his cheek with his full strength for punishment. Though Yue is surprised by the sudden action of Hajime and extents her hand,

Bashi!

It was deflected by Hajime's hand.

Yue wraps her hand with her other hand with a sad expression. With the expression, which was probably produced in the great labyrinth, Hajime [....Don't kid with me] spat out an abuse.

[.....Hajime, what's wrong?]

Yue's question was disregarded and Hajime turned a sharp glance towards Yue like he was another person.

[Well, Yue. Yue is important for me. I don't need anything besides her.]

[.....Hajime, I am happy.]

Though Yue is confused by Hajime's sudden words, her expression softens up immediately. However, contrary to the words, Hajime's gaze remains sharp.

[That why, If I tell you to cut down or cast away someone else, will you do it?]

[If Hajime really wishes for that.]

Yue nods to Hajimes words without hesitation.

[Even if it were Shia, Kaori, Tio or even Myuu?]

[If Hajime wishes for that.]

Almost like embodying Hajime's ideal Yue and carrying out all of Hajimes wishes. To such a girlfriend, rather than being happy about it, he shows an irritated expression. He mutters in a small voice [I was drawn in by that, impossible.....]

And, with a sharp glance he spits out words.

[Is that so.....I understand, bastard.]

In the moment when he declared Yue as an imitation, Hajime's appearance changed. From the appearance of a japanese with black hair, to a boy with gray hair and an eyepatch.

[Crap. I really fell into the trap just like that.....That's why you shouldn't be careless in a great labyrinth.....Better said, the one who created Haltina is one of a fella.] (TL: Just checked, "Haltina" should be

read “Harz”-ina (Harutsuina) which means “amber”, but i’ll leave it Haltina as it was used in earlier chapers)

Yue walks up to the cursing Hajime. And she reaches out to Hajime with a clinging expression.

[.....Stay here? If Hajime stays here he will be happy.]

[Shut up, fake. Don’t call my name so familiarly.]

[.....Why? I’m Yue. Hajime’s lover. Ideal lover. With what are you dissatisfied.]

[With everything you idiot. Doing everything I want, monopolizing me, my ideal lover? That’s only a doll. I don’t have the hobby of playing with dolls.]

Hajime wants to get out of this space already and spits out to Yue that she’s a fake.

[.....Wrong. I’m not a doll. I have all the personality of Hajime’s ideal lover. That’s why, stay here. Everything that Hajime wants will be like his ideal. I’ll always stay by his side.]

Apparently, it doesn’t seem to be an ordinary fake. The world was also produced by the memory and also the characters were read with the transition/teleportation. There, IF there would be something more impossible “Maybe, if it’s that way”-created, an even more ideal world would be created.

Certainly, with the pain tasted in hell, and with what may stand before them in the future, that it would be ideal to live with Yue and the other in the peaceful Japan.

However,

[It’s beyond help. It couldn’t be even more wrong.]

Hajime says it like it was like a trivial matter! A red light emits from his body. The clear red magic is spread though the world in a moment and isn’t stopping and raising its density by a dreadful amount.

As long as this is a trial, when clearing the conditions, it is possible to

escape it, but he can't help it and uses his whole strength. The point is, he's venting his anger.

[.....Why?]

It should be his ideal word, so Yue asks Hajime why he's rejecting it. Hajime continues to discharge his magic power and turns his glare to the fake.

[Don't "Why?"-shit me. It's a simple story. My ideal Yue is not such garbage. This real one exceeds my ideals by far. The real Yue is more attractive than a Yue which doesn't exist!]

Hajime pours out magic to the very limit and remembers the worthless feeling again, lets out a loud roar and pours even more magic out and the space finally begins to crack.

While the worlds cracking it make a "bikibeki"-sound and expands a bit, however the magic is not strong enough and it's already exhausted. However, there is still a stupid method left as he doesn't want to yield to this space. That's because he's pretty stubborn.

Hajime takes out a magic stone out from his stock and uses "Limit Break". He raised his magic power in one go.

[Those guys are always like this. They always trample on my ideals and try to end them! To tie us with them! Strongly! It won't go like those troublesome guys want to! Still, for this reason, I will be the strongest!]

The world is dyed crimson red. Like piercing the heavens, a bright red torrent bursts out.

And,

Bariiiiiiiiiin!!

The world was broken.

Fragments of the world are fluttered like glass in the air. It shines like diamond dust.

At the end of its life, like sparking, the imitation Yue lets out a smile in the broken world. It wasn't like Yue's smile. It was like..... someone else's

smile.

Hajime had an idea what that was, however his consciousness began to fade rapidly and he wasn't able to point that out.

[……You passed. With only being nice you don't stand a chance. There is no sense in only giving. Even if it's hard or painful, only what was piled up in reality can make you happy. Don't forget that.]

It was a voice different from Yue's. It's more manly than feminine. However, it was a very gentle voice.

Hajime at the end of his consciousness cannot help it and raises his voice.

[None of your bussiness…..But, I'll remember it.]

The person was already hard to see, nonetheless still raised a gentle smile at the end…..it felt just like that.

Chapter 128: Immediate Awakening

Hajime felt a dry,cold texture on the back of his head. This feeling rapidly brought Hajime's dozing consciousness back to reality.

[.....Where is.....]

He shook his head to clear it, then quickly stood up and checked his surroundings.

Without any sources of light it was pitch-black. However, since Hajime had his 'Night Vision' the darkness didn't hinder his sight.

As a result, a quick look around told him that he was in a cave similar to the large tree they had entered before he lost consciousness. However he quickly realised that it was much larger.

There was one distinct difference though It was a domed, circular space, filled with transparent tan coloured, oblong objects that gave off a clean feeling. They were regularly spaced throughout the domed area.

Judging from the size, each could fit a person inside.

Hajime thought they looked exactly like coffins.

The empty space Hajime had woken up in was lined up with these tan coffins.

Hajime looked around, but there was nothing in the center of the dome and there didn't seem to be any kind of exit in the surroundings.

He turned his gaze back onto one of the coffins lined up in a row and after hesitating slightly, stepped up beside.

[This is.....just like amber.]

Then Hajime breath caught when he realised Shia was inside the amber.

Hajime thought the sleeping Shia inside the transparent coffin looked just like an ancient insect trapped in amber.

He briefly used 'Sign Perception' to check Shia's status and was able to

sense a steady pulse.

He was able to keep himself calm by recalling when he came to. Hajime was guessing that he had also been encased in amber shortly before he woke up.

There were a total of nine amber coffins enshrined in the room. He suspected that if he checked all of them he would find his other party members trapped inside. They had most likely been imprisoned in the amber after they had entered the hollow of the pseudo-treant.

They were all probably ensnared in appealing dreamlike worlds just as he had been. If they manage to escape from that dream world then it is likely that they will be freed from the amber right in front of Hajime's eyes.

As Hajime found and stared into the amber imprisoning Yue he concluded that there was at least one good thing about the current situation.

[Well, at any rate it's good that Yue and Tio are back in their bodies. Turning them back myself.....may have been a problem.]

Just as Hajime had said, inside two of the amber coffins were Yue and Tio, and not in their goblin forms but their usual, beautiful, bodies. They were probably returned to their original selves when the previous stage was cleared.

Personally Hajime was glad. He would have loved her either way, but the original Yue was the best.

Hajime lowered himself down beside Yue and stretch his hand out towards his beloved's face. Of course the amber got in the way, but he still moved his hand as if to caress her face.

[Come back soon, Yue. I want to hear your voice.....]

For a moment the dangerous thought of breaking the amber by force crossed his mind, but if he did break her free he was worried that it might cause the trial to end in failure, so he held back the urge.

[.....Yue in a blazer.....was dangerous. Shia too....how was dream me able to retain his reason?....Alright, I'll have you wear it once we've returned to Japan.]

As Hajime was caught up in these stupid thoughts the amber began to emit a faint light.

Hajime withdrew his hand and took a step back while watching the change.

As the light grew stronger the amber began to melt from the outside inwards. As the amber melted it would trickle down the side and be absorbed into the ground.

Within 5 minutes the amber covering Yue had completely dissipated.

Hajime confirmed Yue was breathing from the rising and falling of her chest. With that his remaining tension dissolved and he gently gathered her up in his arms.

It wasn't clear whether he didn't want to leave her lying down on the ground, or perhaps more likely, he just wanted to hold her.

Yue's long eyelashes began to quiver as Hajime gently brushed some of her hair away from her face while he cradled her in his arms like a child.

Yue slowly opened her eyes.

[Yue....how are you feeling?]

[.....N, Hajime?]

[Aah, it's me.]

Yue still seemed to be a little dazed, but her gaze didn't wander away from Hajime for even a moment.

Once her consciousness had completely returned she stared at Hajime carefully.

[...Is it.....the real Hajime?]

[Haha, I understand why you would ask, but Yue must decide for herself. Is the me before Yue right now real, or a fake?]

There was most likely an imposter Hajime in the dream Yue saw,but Hajime was happy to let Yue judge for herself. He was sure that she would be able to tell the difference between the real him and the fantasy she had seen.

[By the way, right now I am sure that the Yue in my arms is the real one.]

Hajime's words left Yue staring at him with a blank expression for a moment, but she quickly grasped his meaning and smiled.

Hajime was telling her that there had also been an imitation of Yue in his dream, and that he was glad that she too had dreamed of him in her ideal world.

The corner of Yue's eyes lowered and her mouth arced to form a truly delightful smile.

[……How can you tell?]

Yue already knew the answer, but she still wanted to hear him say it. Even if their hearts understood each other, it was still a wonderful thing to hear your beloved say the words out loud.

Once again, Hajime knew exactly how Yue felt. So he shrugged his shoulders and answered casually.

[I don't feel any uneasiness…..deep inside of me. It's like my soul is whispering to me "the one in your arms is your 'special one'"]

[Fufu…..Me too. Deep inside something is telling me that the person I am embracing now is Hajime. … …Forget I asked?]

[Maa, you were still half asleep.]

Yue eyes softened as Hajime once again shrugged his shoulders, then she suddenly wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him forcefully.

—-Gohon! (TL: *cough*)

[……What was I like in your dream?]

[My school's blazer looked so good on you that I could die.]

Yue could now guess what kind of world Hajime had seen, but the unexpected answer was so amusing that Yue couldn't stop her small voice from ringing out with laughter when she heard it..

[...I'll wear it for you someday.]

[That's something to look forward to. How was it for you?]

Uuohon!

Yue buries her face into Hajime's neck. As he was enjoying the repeated pecks of her lips against his neck Hajime asked her about her dream too.

[.....The ceremonial clothes and throne suited you so well I could almost die.]

[Sorry.....Ceremonial clothes aside, a throne is impossible. Or rather, why a throne?]

[Kufufu....In my dream I was an Empress...and we had 12 children.]

[Just how far did you go in your dream!? A dozen is too many!]

Hajime unintentionally drew himself back from Yue and stared at her in shock. Yue stared at Hajime with a seductive look and licked her glossy lips still wet from the kiss.

This seductive look caused Hajime's breath catch and made his heart to start racing. The fierce spirit that could withstand the attacks of any monster was easily shaken.

[.....Fufu, I have high expectations.]

[.....As expected, I won't be able to win against Yue in my whole life.]

—-Gohotsuehhon! (Editor: *choke* *sob*? TL: YES, NOT MY NOTE!!!! Btw. is more like *hardcore cough*)

Hajime gave a roguish smile while staring up towards the sky, the light of seriousness in Yue's eyes had forced him to give in.

Once again he was sure, 'this is my Yue'.

Returning to the excitement from before, Hajime cupped the side of Yue's cheek with one hand before sliding it down to her waist and embracing her. Yue, sensing that Hajime wanted the same thing as her, closed her eyes and lifted her lips towards his.

Her rose-coloured cheeks were irresistibly cute, and her vibrant tongue, visible through her opened and bewitching lips, was extremely captivating. There was no more need for words as the two drew closer, each wanting the others lips. They continued to draw closer. 10 centimetres.....5 centimetres....and when the distance reached 0...

[Ugottsukeetsuehengohotsugahatsutsutobuetsukushoitsu!!!!] (TL: Gibberish for me. Maybe somebody will get it right: ウゴッツケエッェヘンゴホッガハッツトブエックショイッ！！！！)

[—Aah?]

[—N?]

They were interrupted by a strange noise that was vaguely familiar. This time the unidentified sound had been close enough that they couldn't miss it anymore.

Yue and Hajime exchanged glances, then turned their heads towards the sound. There they saw...

[Uuu *gusu*, whatever....I can see I'm not wanted....even though I did my best to come back.....and then suddenly that atmosphere.....tried to get attention by clearing my throat, but.....uuuu *gusu*...reality is always so cruel....uuu~.]

(TL: Left it *gusu* rather than translating it. It just means crying, bawling or something like that.)

They were greeted with the pitiful sight of Shia, struggling to hold back her tears as her rabbit ears drooped. The drops of moisture trickling out from the corner of her eyes stirred up quite a bit of pity.

It would seem that Shia had woken up shortly after Yue, unfortunately they had been too caught up in their own reunion to notice.

Hajime and Yue quickly began to soothe the utterly miserable Shia. Hajime drew Shia close and tightly embraced her, and after a while the lonely rabbit's usual spirit began to return. Soon both her rabbit ears and cheeks were twitching with delight, while her rabbit tail flapped about happily.

[Un, as I thought, Shia must have rabbit ears. It's the rabbit ears that make her who she is, she just isn't Shia without them. Better put, it's that Shia existence is defined by her rabbit ears.]

[No, I can't understand that! Rabbit ears are not all that I am... but you really seem happy to see them Hajime-san. Did something happen in your dream?]

[Aah~, do I? The Shia in my dream didn't have any rabbit ears, she was just an ordinary girl.]

[.....Is that even Shia?]

[Ano, Yue-san? It's true that my rabbit ears are part of my identity, but I would still be Shia without them you know?]

Shia was beginning to feel a vague sense of unease from their reactions.

Perhaps they are only nice to me because they like my rabbit ears?

Hajime and Yue quickly began to reassure Shia once they saw her worried expression and soon changed the topic to asking her what she had seen in her dream.

It seems that she dreamt of a world where the Haulia tribe weren't exiled and hunted, and she was able to live happily together with Yue and Hajime.

Yue explained hers again as well. It seems that in her dream she was never betrayed and her former country didn't fall to ruin. She had received Hajime as her groom and they had started a family together.

[As for me, my world was one where I was living a happy life with Yue, Shia & the others without ever having been summoned to this world. It basically rewrote the great suffering I experienced in the past but

included the happiness of now.]

[I see... That certainly would be an ideal world in a certain sense]

[.....How did Shia escape?]

Shia answered the question on how she escaped from her dream world with a big smile and a laugh.

[It was obviously because I couldn't deny my current self even if I wanted to.]

[...I see]

Yue nodded with a convinced look while Hajime nodded with a gentle look in his eyes.

In her dream Shia must have remained as her weak self from the past, but she was unable to accept it.

[In the dream I met Hajime-san and the others before my family were attacked. We were all living together and I was fine with just being protected. But something felt wrong! It was if my heart was screaming at me 'there is no way you can stand beside them with a way of life that embraces weakness'. The Hajime-san who was telling me he would protect me and the Yue-san who was telling me not to worry... were certainly sweet and gentle, pleasant even, but the more they told me that the more my discomfort grew... By the time I noticed it, I had already decided to fight by the side of Hajime-san and the others.]

[So that's how you got back...]

[Hai! It is because instead of watching your backs, I want to stand beside you both now and in the future. Even if it ends up being a path filled with hardships and pain.]

While watching Shia grin happily Hajime became lost in thought. Shia had really become strong. The first time they had met.....he had tried to drive her away as hard as he could... Now it wasn't possible for him to reject her, all thanks to her love for Hajime and her strong desire to be an equal part of their group.

A feeling of affection for Shia, different from the one he felt for Yue, welled up inside Hajime. He pulled her head towards his chest and began patting her gently.

Standing at their side, Yue was able to guess Hajime feelings from the affectionate face he was making.

[Fue, umm, Hajime-san?]

[Maa, how should i say it?... welcome back, Shia. You did well.]

[Ah... Yes, I'm back...]

'The place where you belong is by my side' is what Shia felt Hajime meant when she heard him say 'welcome back'. For a short while it left her feeling a little giddy and embarrassed, but soon the happiest smile surfaced on her face and she clung onto Hajime tightly.

As usual, Hajime had Yue cuddled up under his right arm and Shia embraced under the left arm as they all discussed their dreams, and as they were chatting another one of the amber prisons began to give off a faint light. Once again, one of their companions was about to break out of their prison of sweet temptation.

[If I'm not mistaken, that amber is...]

Hajime, recalling who was in that prison, muttered softly. Yue increased the intensity of her magical light so they could better see the escapee. As the light grew brighter...

[Mugaa! Master's scorn is not such a half-hearted thing as that–! If you expect to satisfy me you better train harder before coming back again!]

[[[.....]]]

The person waving her fist in the air and saying such things immediately after waking up was, of course, none other than Tio.

Able to guess the contents of Tio's dream just from her remark, they all reflexively directed silent gazes of scorn at her. Hajime, who was spoken of in such a way, eyes especially looked as if they were staring at trash.

Feeling his gaze, all of the muscles in Tio's body began to quiver. Then,

turning around with an excited expression on her face, she was greeted with the cold gazes of Hajime's group and started to tremble even more. After a moment she started running towards Hajime like a lost dog towards its owner, an expression of ecstasy on her face.

[Master~ This one just got back now~! Shower mistress with your love~!](TL note: She was actually saying love me or favour me, but i decided to go along with this instead.)

Even after being turned into a Goblin she was still the same as always. Tio jumped towards Hajime with a divers pose.

Dopan!!

[Gafu-!]

Hajime silently drew Donner and shot Tio mid jump, causing her to perform a triple flip in the air before landing facedown on the ground. He then stepped onto her back and trampled her further into the ground with his feet, causing her to start making screams heavily mixed with panting noises.

[This worthless dragon! Just what the heck did she have me do in her dream?]

[This is it! This is what this one missed! Even though this one did her best to return from that fake world, this one is rewarded by being shot and trampled underfoot, with eyes that look at this one as if seeing trash! The mildness of that fake was nothing compared to this exquisite pain! This is how mistress' one and only master does things! More! Hurt this one more~!]

[...Just die, you pervert.]

[Abababababababah]

Hajime, unable to listen to her outcries anymore, snapped and invoked 'Thunder Clad'. Tio, unable to withstand it, arched backwards before exhausting her strength and collapsing back onto the ground while giving off white smoke.

However, despite the ordeal, the expression of Tio's face was one of perverted ecstasy.

She looked truly happy, which left Hajime feeling even more repulsed.

Soon after that Tio revived herself without any appearance of having suffered any damage at all. Then, though no one asked and they all refused to listen, she zealously talked at length about how unbecoming a master the Hajime in her dream was.

The fake world should be designed to show the specific individual a sweet fantasy that would leave them trapped inside their dreams.

Assuming that is true, Tio being able to escape due to feeling unsatisfied is an extremely strange story. It's an unpleasant thought, but it seems that Tio was able to escape because the Great Dungeon was unable to gauge her pervertedness.It had been able to read that Hajime is Tio's loved one, and that Tio likes sexual oppression, but it seems it wasn't able to understand how she interpreted 'punishment' and 'reward'.

Now, the Great Dungeon, who's trap had easily been escaped and was being spoken ill of after having done it's best to create Tio's ideal master, seemed kind of pitiable.

Haltina must never have expected this kind of pervert would come to challenger it.

In his mind Hajime paid his respects to Haltina while imagining them wearily crumbling into dust.

While they were all caught up in this another one of the amber prisons begun to shine. It would seem the next one to escape would be Kaori.

Hajime and the others approached the side of her amber shortly before she opened her eyes. At first she seemed to be panting faintly, but when she saw Hajime and the others gathered around her she took a deep breath in relief. However, the moment her eyes met with Hajime's her faced flushed a boiling red and she retreated until her back hit the wall.

Hajime, who had never been avoided by Kaori before, was more confused than surprised. He turned his gaze to Yue and the others as if to

ask what happened. Kaori, noticing Hajime's confusion, quickly attempted to resolve the misunderstanding.

[Oh...! It's not like that Hajime-kun! Just now that is, a little, how should I say it... Anyway it's not like that. I wasn't avoiding you...]

[Ahh~ No, it's not a problem... I guess it must have something to do with your dream... Just what was it that you saw...?]

[Eh? Ah, what... you ask? That's... ....Awwaaah]

Kaori tried to answer the question asked by the wryly smiling Hajime, but wasn't able to give a coherent answer. Her cheeks started blushing more and more until she eventually covered her face with both hands and started to moan.

The girls were able to get the gist of her dream from her reaction and each displayed a different response. Tio was going [Hohou~] while grinning as if she found something extremely interesting. Shia was muttering [...Kaori-san tteba] while blushing and intermittently averting her eyes. And as for Yue... she attacked her with sharp words while looking at her with scornful eyes.

[...Kaori, you closet pervert]

Kaori trembled and tried to make excuses for her still beet-red face.

[I...I am not a closet pervert! D..don't say such weird things!]

[...then, tell us what kind of dream you had.]

[Th..that's...It..it was... just a repetitive everyday life]

[...to say you attacked Hajime on daily basis...]

[I...I didn't attack! I just pushed him down a little... after that Hajime-kun himself... waaah!]

[...Kaori is banned from getting close to Hajime. She's too dangerous.]

[I..I'm not dangerous! Hajime-kun she's wrong, you know? I wouldn't attack Hajime-kun, you know?]

[Haa... yes, yes... I understand.]

[Uu~~]

It would seem all sorts of things happened with Hajime while Kaori was in her dream. Although she was able to shake off the temptation and return... it seems she indulged in quite the bittersweet springtime of her youth before she returned.

Kaori kept blushing and stealing glances at Hajime. It seems that this innocent reaction stirred up the sadist in Yue, who started trying to further stimulating Kaori by whispering something into her ear.

Kaori covered her ears and started shaking her head, trying to escape from Yue's tormenting whispers. It was like watching a pitiful mouse being toyed with by a playful cat.

[Maa, anyway, with this all our members are back.]

Shia released the tension from her shoulders upon hearing Hajime's words, then turned her gaze towards Kouki and the others.

[That's true. Then, what should we do about them?]

[Let's see... ...If it comes down to it we can just destroy the amber, but for now let's wait for them to break out on their own. If we interfere it'd probably render their efforts to challenge the Great Dungeon thus far pointless.

[How long do we wait?]

[Hmm... perhaps long enough for us to eat and take a little break? In my case, I snapped and destroyed my dream with brute force. I probably cleared it just fine....but I only have about ten percent of my magic left so I would like to rest and recover for a bit.

[.....Just what the heck were you thinking?]

Shia was directing an astonished gaze towards Hajime as she spoke. Their usual roles had been reversed and Hajime was wearing quite a bitter expression.

[Believe me, I am reflecting on my actions. I seem to have been unusually worked up since we entered this Dungeon.]

[Ahh~! That'd be because the Dungeon used Yue-san...]

[Maybe, but I can't use that as an excuse, you know, because in a sense it proves that it really is a weakness. It'll probably be difficult, but I am going to try and use this opportunity to overcome it.]

Shia directed an admiring gaze at the Hajime who was showing such an admirable attitude. Then, after throwing a sidelong glance at Yue, who was still busy teasing Kaori, and Tio, who was listening in and breathing roughly, Shia leaned in and whispered to Hajime.

[Ano, Hajime-san...]

[N?]

[Umm, that is...If what happened to Yue-san were to happen to me... would you also get angry like that?]

Shia was averting her gaze, but her rabbit ears were honed in on Hajime's direction. She wanted to know if Hajime would get angry for her sake, even if wasn't to the same extent as he did for Yue.

At first Hajime was going to brush her off as usual, but when he saw Shia peeking at him with wavering eyes he scratched his cheek and decided to answer her honestly this time.

[The reason I destroyed the dream wasn't just because of Yue. You were there too, but I... just couldn't be happy without the Shia I know.]

[Ah..... ehehe, is that so?]

Shia was waving her rabbit ears and tail around happily while wearing a delighted smile on her face. Upon seeing her happy expression Hajime's hand reached out naturally to feel them.

Soon after, Kaori, unable to take Yue's teasing anymore, clung onto Hajime in tears. Shia, who was still in an excessively good mood, begun to soothe Kaori while Yue puffed out her chest with satisfaction.
Tio....well let's leave her aside.

They decided to eat a meal while they waited for Kouki and the others, but even after 3 hours there was no sign of them escaping.

[It might be better to save them soon...]

[... ...n, right]

[It does seem like... we would be here for a long time if we keep waiting for them to get out on their own](Note by TL: Shia)

Both Yue and Shia voiced their agreement, thinking that it couldn't be helped. However Kaori quickly stepped in.

[Wouldn't it be alright to wait a little longer? Just a bit more? If it's Shizuku-chan and the others then they can surely...]

Since Kaori herself understood Shizuku and the others desperation better than anyone, one way or another she wanted them to capture the dungeon and receive the Age of Gods magic. A person's survival rate increases by leaps and bounds with even one Age of Gods magic. Kaori wanted them to get stronger so that they too could safely return to Japan.

The reason Hajime had allowed them to accompany him into the dungeon was so that he could use them as foot soldiers in the cases where apostles like Nointo appeared again. To further this plan he was hoping they would be able to obtain the Age of Gods magic here and then head out and defeat the other Great Dungeons on their own.

That's why, when he saw Kaori's pleading eyes, he shrugged his shoulders and decided to wait a little while longer. Kaori smiled happily when she saw Hajime agree and began to casually try to get closer to him, however she was immediately blocked just as casually by Yue.

As this was happening one of the ambers started to shine.

[That amber is...Shizuku-chan's!]

[Huh, as expected the fastest one was Yaegashi.]

[Fumu. Shizuku is level-headed after all](Tio)

Upon seeing the melting amber Kaori rushed over at full speed. Soon after Shizuku abruptly opened her eyes and began groaning in a soft voice as she tried to get up. Kaori reached over and supported her as Shizuku weakly raised herself out of the remains of the amber.

[Where am I...? ...Kaori?]

[Un, it's me, Shizuku-chan. Welcome back!]

[I see, I'm back, huh. Fuu, for some reason I'm feeling quite tired...]

Shizuku gave a heavy sigh as if she really was feeling tired, before shaking her head as if to clear it of some lingering thought. She then smiled at Kaori and returned her greeting with a warm [I'm back].

After Kaori and Shizuku had finished their happy reunion Hajime and others approached as well.

[You overslept quite a bit, but it's good that you were able to overcome it]

[Hah? Ah, Na..Nagumo-kun... Y..you're right. It's good to be back.]

For some reason the moment Hajime called out to her Shizuku's gaze began to wander aimlessly and she started to stutter.

Upon seeing Shizuku behave strangely Yue and the others became puzzled. Shizuku cleared her throat as if to hide her unrest and turned her face away from them to conceal her slightly reddened cheeks.

[...seems Kouki and others are taking their time, huh?]

[Un, we came back several hours ago, but since then Shizuku-chan is the first one to escape.]

[Is that so? They came up with a troubling trial I guess. Well, it can't be helped. While saying so, it seems I made you wait quite a bit. I guess I should say I am sorry?]

[Don't worry about it, Shizuku-san. Congratulations on your escape. ... and... i'd like to ask you a tiny question, but...]

[Thank you Shia. It's alright, what might it be about?]

Shizuku replied to Shia with a smile that was using all of her reserves of composure. She had gotten a bad feeling about Shia's question right away.

However, it seems the one who would be asking the question wouldn't

be Shia, but rather Yue, who had somehow gotten beside Shizuku without anyone noticing.

[.....]

[Wh..what is it?]

[.....]

[Umm, looking at me silently like that makes me feel uncomfortable... ... Yue?]

For some reason Yue was starting into Shizuku's eyes from beside her. Shizuku was desperately trying to suppress the feeling of unease that Yue's exquisite, doll-like, deadpan face was stirring inside her.

Finally, Yue asked a question with a tone that suggested she was confirming something she already knew.

[...Shizuku...what kind of dream was it?]

[Eh? What kind you say? It was an ordinary dream. There was nothing unusual. Yes, it was a really plain, ordinary dream]

[...ordinary? Who was in it?]

[Who you say? ...Everyone. Everyone was there]

[... ... I see]

Shizuku answered firmly while looking straight into Yue's eyes, as if to show that she wasn't disturbed one bit. Although this was her intention, she didn't realise that her extremely abstract answers had given away the state of affairs in her heart.

Yue, of course, had noticed it, as had the others. However Shizuku was giving off such a strong aura implying she didn't want to talk about it that they decided to leave it be for now.

When Yue and the others backed off Shizuku appeared openly relieved.

With the inquisition finished, they guided the tired Shizuku to the centre of the room and begun to prepare tea. As she was being lead to join the impromptu tea time, Shizuku couldn't help muttering to herself.

[... ...Me being a princess is impossible... ...and more importantly, why wasn't the prince Kouki or Ryutarou?... ... murmur...]

Though there wasn't anyone close enough to hear her.

Several hours later Shizuku finished resting and had completely recovered from her mental fatigue. Having decided they couldn't wait any longer, they were now preparing to force the breakout of Kouki, Ryutarou and Suzu.

Hajime or Yue could've easily been able to destroy the amber, but in their party was someone who had a skill that was much better suited for the job.

[Now then Kaori, it's all yours. Try not to 'decompose' their bodies.]

[Un, it's alright. Outside of real battle there's no need to worry about the control anymore.]

After giving her reply to Hajime, Kaori abruptly put her hand on the nearest amber and began to release her maryoku (magic) as if to permeate it. Pale, silvery, magic rays coloured the room in moonlit brilliance as Kaori's maryoku delicately coiled around and spread itself evenly throughout the remaining amber prisons.

['Decompose.']

There was no need to chant, but since it helped to focus the image in her mind she recited it on purpose. Immediately after, the amber surrounding Kouki and others started to crumble. it looked more like it was decaying than melting, the particles that became too small for the eyes to see looked as if they were vanishing into thin air.

Within 3 minutes all the amber had completely decomposed and vanished into thin air. Concerned over the aftereffects of being forcibly released from their trials, Shizuku and Kaori anxiously began to check the condition of Kouki and the others.

However it seemed it was an unnecessary fear.

[.....Huh? Wha, Kaori? Shizuku? This is? But I was... with you two...]

[N, ah? What is this place? I thought I was……]

[Eh? No way… Eri was… …Eri…]

All three of them woke up suddenly, as if they had never been asleep.

Because they had suddenly awoken from their pleasant dreams to find themselves in a dimly lit cave it seems their senses had been thrown into confusion. Suzu was especially distraught, reaching her grasping hand out towards empty space. It was obvious from her words who she was reaching out for. Thinking about what kind of dream she must have been having, it is understandable why she wasn't able to wake herself up from it.

Both Kaori and Shizuku made sympathetic expressions when they saw Suzu's sad state. It wasn't surprising that the severe betrayal had left her wounded deeply. Though she is always laughing and smiling, even now that wound must be bleeding beneath the surface.

The trio slowly become silent as they sorrowfully started to realise that what they had been seeing was only a dream. However, they all handled the realisation differently. Ryutarou, even though he continues to give off a dejected feeling, abruptly scratches his head with an embarrassed expression while saying [Guess it can't be helped]. Kouki just chewed his lips with a vexed expression. While Suzu quickly forced a smile onto her face in an attempt to deceive them.

Since they couldn't bare to watch her like this, both Kaori and Shizuku immediately pulled Suzu into a tight hug.

Just as Hajime was about to call out to them, a magic circle appeared in the centre of the room.

It would appear that when everyone escapes from the amber they are forcibly sent on to the next stage. Ryutarou aside, Kouki and Suzu are still unstable. Hajime would've preferred to let them recover first, but… it appears that wasn't going to be possible.

[Amanogawa, Taniguchi, this is no time for you to be caught up in your thoughts, get ready. If you don't, all your dreams really will fall apart.]

[tte... ... Aah, I know.]

[U..un. Right!]

The next instant the magic circle's light burst forth and filled the view of Hajime and the others.

Chapter 129: Ordeal of Pleasure

Hajime and the rest reappeared in the same forest of trees that they had left from.

However, it was too soon to start celebrating just yet. The area was vast, with trees stretching as far as the eye could see, giving Hajime no clue on which direction to head.

In many ways it resembled the tree levels in the Orcus Labyrinth, a forest somehow existing underground. Most of the trees appeared to be about the same height, but one tree in the distance seemed to tower over the rest. Hajime guessed that was their next destination.

“It looks like everyone is here.”

Hajime carefully watched the other members of the group with a squint. He had feared that the transportation circle would have split them up or put them into some new challenge, but it appeared like his worries were unfounded.

“....Hajime, any fakes?” Yue inquired.

“No, everyone seems okay. My eyes tell me that everyone is real.”

“It’s okay if Hajime-san says so.” Shia gives out a look of confidence.

Hajime wished Shia would be more careful in case he himself was the fake. However, he reasoned that Yue would be able to tell if Hajime was a fake and warn Shia, if that situation arouse.

Watching the dense forest ahead, Hajime gave the order for them to get moving. He glanced over his shoulder, examining the figure of Kouki and Suzu who wore shadows over their expressions.

Whatever Suzu’s dream had been, it seem to have hurt her deeply. Hajime couldn’t guess what Kouki had seen. No, whatever it was, it was enough that he didn’t come back to reality. Shaking off the dream was too much of a shock. Those dreams seemed to cut the party as bad as any nightmare. It was a deep pain that they would never be able to completely escape from. Every member struggled to shake off the shock of those

dreams and come back to reality.

However, they were in a labyrinth right now. They couldn't afford to lose their edge, or a single misstep could bring them to despair in a matter of seconds. The silence seemed to drag on forever.

"Suzu, Koaki, Are you just going to give up?" Hajime breaks the silence harshly.

"Like we have a choice!"

"Eh? What do you mean by that?'

Hajime stared down the two with piercing eyes. The sharp-tempered Ryuutaro raised his eyebrows in anger at Hajime's harsh words, but Hajime continued to speak before he could say anything.

"This is one of the great labyrinths. Death is merely a step ahead. Death is around every corner, just a second away. If you can't concentrate, then just give up here. Die in vain."

"Just wait for a moment there..."

"Even if you forgive yourself, that doesn't change the fact that you were unable to clear the trial from before. You can't change that. However, you could at least have the determination to rise to all the remaining challenges as necessary. You don't see it now, but someone who has no spirit is worse than a burden to the rest of us."

"... I,"

"I can open a gateway outside the labyrinth for you to flee. Either proceed or give up, but I won't allow you to continue like this."

Silence wrapped around the group. Kouki clinched his teeth in a desperate attempt to suppress indignation. However, after what Hajime had said to the group, he wasn't surprised that Kouki was angry.

The group had realized their failure. They had let their attention slip, unconsciously assuming things would turn out okay because Hajime was there to pick up the slack. Even though they were looking to become stronger than Hajime, Kouki's group had depended on him to get through

the middle section of the labyrinth. They were supposed to beat the labyrinth on their own, yet their dependence on Hajime made them angry at themselves.

However, they were afraid to vent their anger here, as Hajime waited for an answer. Kouki took deep breaths, attempting to discharge his anger with fresh air.

“Nagumo, We’re okay now. We can keep going!” Suzu declared.

Hajime gave Suzu a nod, the mood immediately turning lighter. For a moment, Suzu trembled at a look from Hajime’s eyes, but then gave Hajime a decisive nod.

“If Suzu can keep going. That’s enough for me!” Kouki speaks up.

“Is that so? If you’re good now, then focus on your surroundings.” Hajime responded and just as quickly started walking again.

Ryuutaro clapped Kouki on the shoulder hard as he stared at the Hajime’s back. Kouki knew Ryuutaro was trying to support him in a way only a childhood friend could and gave him a look of appreciation.

Even Kaori and Shizukuo seemed to be affected by the Suzu’s encouragement and picked up their steps, taking either side of Suzu for support.

Hajime headed straight towards the trees he had identified earlier.

The area was quiet; there wasn’t even a sound of crickets. Even the wind wasn’t blowing, so when Hajime brushed by a branch the noise seemed to echo in the silence.

“Hmmm... this is a somewhat unpleasant feeling.”

“Yeah, it’s the same feeling like when we were in Orcus Labyrinth, right before the ambush.” Kouki responds.

“For sure. But no signs of demons.”

Everyone’s eyes were leery with tension. Tio had her brows furrowed. Kaori and Shizuku shivered as they remembered the demon ambush, the demon woman toying with them.

“I sent some spider-golems ahead and they haven’t detected anything. I suspect we can continue without any incidents. But if it’d make you feel better, we can burn the whole forest down.”

“Nagumo… I don’t know how to say this, but sometimes your ideas scare me.” Ryuutaro Tsukkomi’d.

“I learned to think this way in the hell of the abyss. I’m alive today because of it. I didn’t have a barrier maker like Suzu to protect me.” Hajime responded seriously.

Turning everything to ash would leave nowhere for anything to hide. Although it would probably be a little dangerous if the surrounding area was turned to flames.

It looked like Hajime wasn’t able to persuade the other members. Instead, he removed Getsurin and several cross bits from his “treasure room”, just to be safe.

No one thought they would regret stopping Hajime. They didn’t know what would happen if they let Hajime carpet bomb the entire place. In particular, the way out might disappear.

“… Is it? Rain?”

“Looks like it, it’s starting to trickle down.”

Kouki frowned at the feeling of moisture from overhead. Suzu agreed as she wiped off her hand. They shuttered at the seemingly impossible phenomenon as their eyes met with the others in the group.

“Tsch… Yue!” Hajime called out suddenly.

“It’s a… holy shield!” Yue responded.

Hajime immediately reacts to the abnormality, calling Yue to create a barrier just in time.

Immediately after…

Zaaaaaaaaa…

The rain quickly turned into a torrent, striking Yue’s barrier and sliding

off the surface with a dorori sound. However, by all odds it couldn't be mere rain. The viscosity wasn't right, plus they were underground and there was no sky.

If they could figure out the trap. Were they being showered with sulfuric acid or some kind of toxin, or was it some kind of demon in disguise? This time, it seemed like the later.

"Nagumo-kun, it's all around us!"

Gazing calmly, even in this circumstance, Hajime carefully observes the outside of the barrier through the growing tension. The trees, grass, and land seemed to oozing out milky white stuff.

"Is it a slime or...? How were you able to conceal yourself? I can't even sense it with the magic eye."

"Nagumo! Our Feet!"

"It's through the barrier. Decomposition!"

While Hajime was contemplating a slime with the ability to avoid his notice, the milky slime had come up through the ground and surrounded their feet. Normally, the effect of "holy shield" is a spherical barrier deployed all the way to ground, but did not go into the ground. It seemed like the milky slime was lurking in the ground and was now attacking from the inside out.

To suddenly be attacked from the feet. Kaori hurried to invoke decomposition as the milky-white slime had already reached their knees.

The milky-white slime collapsed into smooth particles. As far as how slimes typically fight, they don't have much in the way of physical attacks, but they'll consume something and then melt it, making it disappear completely.

"Oraa... It's sticking to everything!"

Ryuutaro pounded a fist into the milky-white slime, which was expanding to try to cover him. The gauntlet on his hand transmitted the impact through the slime, ripping it apart as his fist strikes the inner wall

of Yue's barrier.

"You fool, Ryuutaro! You're making a mess!"

"This brain muscle! You're splashing it on me!"

"You? I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" Ryuutaro apologized.

"It feels so gross!" Shizuku complained.

Suzu and Shizuku raised voices of complaint as Ryuutaro attacked the slime. His attempt to punch the slime had splashed it all over the people beside him. (Translation Note: Imagine the girls all covered in sticky white stuff and you get the gist.)

"Oh no, Shizu, are you alright?"

"Yes, I'm okay, Kouki. These guys seem to die unexpectedly easy..." Suzu explained.

"Oh, no, I'll help... erm... Oh, never mind!" Kouki turned away and blushed.

"?"

The monsters didn't seem all that dangerous. In fact they were rather fragile from what you'd expect in a labyrinth. However, they had a bad side effect on the girls. Kouki couldn't talk to her without averting his gaze.

They also had to avert their eyes quickly from Suzu because she wasn't in a much better situation.

However, Suzu had a more suspicious face when she looked at Kouki and witnessed the slimes beginning to cover the outside of the barrier.

The effect seemed to disturb Kouki.

That was perhaps the nature of the milky-white slime. First it rained down on everyone. Then it got spread around, such as when Ryuutaro hit them. In other words, it was there to cover you in the turbid liquid.

What Kouki was reacting to.... to put it simply, the appearance of Suzu and Shizuku covered in slime looked really bad. However, the girls didn't

seem to notice it themselves.

And Yue and the others were regrettably not an exception.

As the milky white slimes had breached the barrier, Yue attacked with a scaled-down version of “Saint Sever” while burning the pieces away with “blue dragon”. However, she wasn’t able to stop minute drops from falling down on her face, streaming cloudy liquid over her cheeks and neck.

Shia had also struck one of the milky-white slimes with Doryukken, which had been trying to cover her like Ryuutaro and Shizuku, splattering what was attached. However, because her power was higher it ended up in a shockwave unlike Ryuutaros. The amount was small, but still...

Tio had taken the blunt of Shia’s attack, becoming accidently bathed in milky-white slime. Shia wasn’t trying to aim for Tio, but it seemed like it was just bad luck. Tio was in front, and the effect was similar to being hit with a pie in the face. (Translation Note: Yeah, we’ll go with pie. There are kids reading this. This is a totally innocent scene and totally not a bukkake)

Tio was in a kimono with charming black hair covered in white liquid. Her leg peeked out from the hem of her hadake with more white liquid flowing down her legs. Yeah, this looked really bad on the surface.

Kaori was the only one spared from the blunt of the damage. There was no splattering of liquid with the use of her decomposition spell. However, the initial rain before Yue had put up a barrier had already done its damage, and she didn’t look much better than any of the other members.

Hajime considered using “summarize thunder” to hide the slime covered girls from the boys. Yue’s appearance was too dangerous and Ryuutaro was looking around with eyes a little too bright for Hajime’s comfort.

Hajime decided to be careful though since he still didn’t know the milky white slime’s weakness. It was important to be prudent.

(It’ll be difficult to forget what has been seen this day.)

A lifeform this dangerous may find itself quickly becoming extinct.

So, like this, the milky slime in the barrier were easily destroyed. Now that the slimes on the inside were gone, Hajime turned his attention to those outside the “holy shield”, which was now covered in creamy white slime. He slowly approached the wall and transferred a cross bit and a Getsurin outside of the wall.

“After all, it becomes like this...”

Hajime examined the world outside with his demon eye via the cross bit. The world outside overflowed with milky white slime. The walls and ceiling were covered and slime rained down. The ground had become a sea of milky white.

If it had not been for Yue’s quick cast of the defensive magic, they could have ended up being quickly swallowed. This was truly a great labyrinth.

“Yue, will the barrier hold? I’m going to need to burn everything.”

“Nn... go.”

At Yue’s word, Hajime releases all the crossbits and Getsurin at the same time.

“Reproduction Magic, it’s time to burn them to hell!”

“So he’s going to use that...”

“Last time you used this Suzu’s barrier would have broke if we didn’t have revival magic? We’re going to die. Don’t attack them Hajime, we’re not the enemies!” Kyuutaro pleaded.

Hajime gave Ryuutaro a look before turning away. Suzu wore an expression like a dead fish. It seemed that Hajime’s prison of flames had turned into a trauma for her. Her eyes were slightly watery. Kouki was still evading his eyes. It looked like Kouki still remembered.

“Kaori, please get rid of the rest of the slime with your decomposition. It looks bad.”

Kaori was surprised at the attention Hajime was suddenly giving her. She looked around before realizing what Hajime was talking about when he said it “looked bad.”

All the ladies were dirty and covered in white liquid and it looked kind of... they blushed all at once. Hajime was purposely being vague, in consideration of the fact that weren't aware of their own appearances. To directly point out what it looked like would be a bad move for any man.

Kaori blushed, finally understanding and giving a look of appreciation, she embarked on cleaning up the white liquid.

Hajime refocused on an image coming in from the cross bit.

(The rain of slime seemed to not weaken at all. Is there a limitless supply? Unless we take care of the ceiling, there is no meaning to this.)

The sea of slime was increasing in volume each moment. Hajime sent the Getsurin to the ceiling. It struck the ceiling, only to have milky white slime get wrapped around it, weakening the momentum.

Hajime made cuts in the ceiling using formation magic, the Getsurin cutting even marks into the rock like cutting through butter before making a central hole.

Hajime drew a small arch in the ceiling, then confirmed that the Getsurin cut in far enough that he could just see the tip. He brought out a spider-golem and another Getsurin from the "treasure room".

The metallic spider overstretches the drop to nothingness around each hole.

He pulled out more spiders, and each on stretched itself across another hole as if they were glued to the ceiling. The spread out in unison across the ceiling.

Now, he could control hundreds of units when they were set to non-combative maneuvering. After practice, he was capable of moving 14 times the previous number simultaneously.

As result, 80 spider golems spread across the ceiling, and began activating a drill. to suppress the milky slime, it seemed like they came from the small holes and walls, so the only way to stop the slimes was to destroy the source.

The drilling seemed to work, stopping the outflow of slime from the places the golem's drilled. The shower weakened visibly. The ceiling now emitted a red light, like the countless tails of a meteor shower.

(Okay, first take care of the ceiling, then we'll worry about the ground.)

Hajime thought things through as he spun the Getsurin spun another hole and stuck another spider to the ceiling. In turn, he opened a gate in the circle of the Getsurin and began to remove tar from the "treasure room".

"Well, well, to make my Yue dirty. I'll need to burn the slime away without a trace."

Hajime gave a fearless smile that showed the canines in his mouth, a heinous look in his eyes. Being able to cover Yue and Shia in white liquid was something Hajime couldn't forgive.

Exactly where those commendable words were earlier when they could avoid the indiscretion...

"Devil, is this a devil? Shizu, Shizu, I'm scared..."

"Just don't look... Suzu, Maybe if you can't see him..."

"It's dicey, Kouki He's being unexpected and imposing again.

"So it's a demon who looks like a man."

Shizuku and company looked in horror at Hajime's demonic appearance. Ryuutaro looked like he had seen true terror. Hajime was the kind of guy they should defeat as a hero, heroes driven by a sense of mission.

On the other hand, Yue and her group spoke up.

"Nnn.... Hajime, nice."

"He is doing good!"

"Master ah... a glance like that. Would you only direct that eye towards your mistress?"

"... Hajime-kun... Manly..."

If something could be said of the situation, Love is blind? No matter how you look at it, Hajime's face looked evil. However, to Yue and company it only served to charm them and make their hearts race. It was too late for them in a lot of ways.

Kaori wore a complex expression on her face at the sight of a belligerent Hajime. She had seen Hajime fight on in desperate situations before like in the Melusine Underwater Ruins. Seeing him like this reminded her of why she fell for him in the first place.

Looking at Kaori in such a situation, Koaki's party looked at her as if the distance between them had become all the greater.

Suzu, after seeing Hajime's fighting spirit and determination to annihilate the room full of slime, also diverted her line of sight. Even she couldn't handle the sight of his heinous expression. That was normal, wasn't it?

At that time, a tremendous roar echoed across the outside of the barrier. It was the sound of rocks cracking. The sound of destruction rang out in bigger and bigger succession. It sounded like the continuous burst of a firecracker, the roar beyond comparison. That was the carpet bombing started with Hajime's cross bit.

The milky white slime covering the barrier started to writhe. Hajime becomes covered in a sheer crimson light. Yue admired it. Hajime wasn't aware of it, single-mindedly focused on controlling the cross bits on the outside of the barrier.

The sea of slime had turned into a burning hell, reflecting in the magic stone eye behind his eye patch.

Hajime had spread black tar on the ceiling, creating blackrain that ran down from the ceiling, polluting the milky white slime below, while the Getsurin added in sprinkling tar across the sea of slime.

After enough tar had saturated the slime, the cross-bits began to drop cluster bombs. Each of the holes Hajime had created were packed full of small explosives and burning powder, the contents of each was enough to destroy a small house.

The cluster bombs ignited one after another, the slime sea undergoing one explosion after another, tearing the slimes into various small pieces. The explosive flame flooded across the sea, creating a lake of fire 3000°C in a prison of flame ignited by tar.

A tremendous amount of heat licked across the ground, rising into the air in a spire of scarlet. The milky white slime continued to burn, helpless to escape the heat. Hajime's murderous intent spread out, creating a world of scarlet that consumed everything. The trees were baked, the ground was melted, and the air was scorched. The Jukai forest was completely consumed.

A gap in the barrier finally became noticeable as milky slime fell away, burning red. Someone noticed it and raised a voice, only to realize that the barrier of slimes was replaced with a sea of flame, and the white slimes were quickly turned to ash.

Before long, the milky white around them had become completely eliminated. There was nothing left but a few puddles of tar on the ground.

"I ~, It seems like they were devoured."

"Looks like we no longer need the barrier."

Yue nodded in confirmation.

"We should maintain it a bit more. There might be a few still lurking around."

When Hajime stated so, countless black objects from the ceiling came down in a suite with a constant speed. It was the spider golems, which were lowering from hanging threads from the ceiling.

"It comes!?"

The spectacle of dozens of spider golems coming from the ceiling caused some of the party to shout out in surprise. After they realized what it was, they blushed in embarrassment, although those that recognized what they were only grinned.

The spider golems landed on the ground and began drilling once again

into the floor and giant trees in the same way they had chewed up the ceiling.

Hajime finally affords some of his concentration to talk to the group.

“It’ll take some time to finish drilling all the giant trees. I don’t know how many slime there are out there. It’d be nice if we didn’t face any trouble once we leave the barrier, so we can take some time to finish up here. In that case, Yue, if you could leave the barrier up for just a bit longer.”

“…. Nn.”

While concentrating on operating the spider golems, Hajime instructed Yue who readily agreed. Either way, the crisis seemed to be over and everyone started to relax.

Kaori was already helping remove the white fluid from the other girls, ending their indecent appearance. However, Ryuutaro vowed to never forget.

Hajime continued to drill to the extent that it wouldn’t disturb their journey the rest of the way to the giant trees. He sat cross-legged in place. In was a cardinal rule of an adventurer to rest when you could rest.

The others saw him rested and committed to resting themselves as well.

At that time, a soft weight press onto Hajime’s back. Looking back over his shoulders, Hajime sees the figure of Yue there. She was hugging him from behind. She was spoiling Hajime as usual and put on a small smile for him.

“Ah… Hajime, something strange, Ah, really, I want that too Hajime.”

“What, no, what are you talking about. Yue? Together in such a circumstance?”

Yue’s breath is rough. Her lovely eyes were just a bit misted, and she was licking her lips. Any way you look at it, she was aroused.

If they were at an inn for the night, Hajime might have rejoiced, but this was clearly not the time right now.

To get aroused so suddenly in this situation, it seemed impossible. There was something abnormal with Yue right now. Hajime examined Yue with a serious look. Yue's body was hot and trembling. Her body was pressed up against his with an impatience that even made it hard for Hajime.

Hajime shakes his head in wonder watching Yue's condition before the shadow of the other girls caught his attention. He looked to where Shia was.

"Hajime... me... me, already... ah."

"Shia, you too?"

"Ah, Hajime, I like, I like you."

"Wait, just wait."

Shia prevented escape by sandwiching Hajime's arm between her thighs and chest and hugging his right arm, rubbing his body. Obviously, it's the same symptoms as Yue. Cheeks red, respiration high, pupils look hazy with animal passion. It's like they had been shot with a full throttle of sex appeal. Hajime felt a little dizzy from the smell.

"What on earth..."

Hajime stared at them with a bewildered look. There was another figure that was acting the same way as Yue and Shia.

Kaori also had directed an eye towards Hajime, writhing unbearably. Kaori crawls towards him little by little on all fours, aligning hesitantly and rubbing Hajime's legs. Tio even...

Koaki's group were no exception. Ryuutaro's pupils were hollow, and he was writhing uncomfortably. As if losing his senses, he creeps up next to Suzu as she hugs herself in a slouch. Meanwhile, Kouki is giving Shizuku a side glance with bloodshot eyes. He finally stands, approaching Shizuku with a hand extended towards her.

The problem was that Shizuku was acting in a very similar way. She was writhing in spot, stiff and unmoving, while biting her upper lip. She

was silent, but had a tinge of red on her cheeks. It wouldn't do to have them have to endure this situation. Once everyone regained their senses, it might be too late.

It was hard to tell what was really going on in Kouki's mind, but there was lust in his eyes. Suzu is shivering and suffering, and Ryuutaro tries to catch her as she falls to the ground. As he called out her name, it was clear his intentions weren't noble.

"Shit, this is from the essence of the slime."

Hajime pulls out two cursed bora artifacts from the "treasure room" and slaps them on the wrists of Ryuutaro and Kouki. They seemed to be causing the worst problem. Shizuku and Suzu were delirious, even calling out Kaori and Yue's names in their fervor. The artifacts used some kind of restriction spatial magic.

It seemed like the situation was safe for a second, then Suzu started to extend a hand toward Shizuku. The expression was one that shouldn't show on a girl's face. It was the kind of important expression you only showed to the one you had your heart set on.

Hajime's clicked his tongue in annoyance, throwing another bora on Suzu as well.

"Oh... is master safe? It looks like that slime's mucus is a powerful aphrodisiac." Tio explains.

While restraining Suzu, he stops Kaori as she reaches out to cling to his left arm. Tio begins to move towards him at a steady pace with a calm look.

Hajime looks up at her.

To Hajime's surprised, she begins to talk as if normal.

"My magic is being obstructed by the feeling of intense pleasure. Soon, I might lose my consciousness and be blinded by the pleasure. This is more than just a troublesome thing. Since it wasn't just a little, I was bathed in it, it'll be impossible to resist. If the battle had been prolonged, it would have been complete destruction. Even if we survived, the after effects

would become... rather dangerous."

"Oh, Oh, yeah..."

"Hmm, probably, the goal of this test is to endure pleasure and overcome difficulties together, or to let bonds be defeated by pleasure. In any case, the "liberators" played a really nasty trick. They probably didn't expect someone like past with such a high poison resistance."

"Tio...."

"What can I say? It's very much like master."

Hajime, while agreeing with Tio's predictions, gave out a bigger question while eyeing Yue and the others.

"You guess that it was the slime's mucus that caused this situation... it's safe to think that. But why are you so calm? You got hit with more mucus than anyone."

"Certainly, the liquid is affecting this mistress. In fact, my body is greatly affected by it. I'm thinking right now that I'd like master to lick me."

"Tio..."

Tio throws out her chest, giving Hajime a wide eye look as she flashes a beautiful smile.

Although Tio is being violated by intense pleasure, she's keeping her senses by the power of her will. It seemed to be a sense of pride. Hajime wondered how long she'd be able to keep it up. After all, she was hit with a lot of aphrodisiac...

"Mistress is her master's slave. Compared with the degree of pleasure the pain you give me causes, this is only lukewarm. Now if you wanted to hit me I wouldn't be able to take it anymore."

"Is that so..."

Eyes! Kuwa! Hajime eyes turned sour and looked at her as if she was dirt. Tio, who could even shake the pleasure of the slime, began to shiver uncontrollably.

“As expected of Ms. Tio. Do you mind keeping your distance from me?”

“Oh no, to think you’d call me so indifferently and distantly. Ah... this is bad, the pleasure.”

Tio was calm a little while ago, but the rapidly growing pleasure of Hajime’s disgust quickly defeated her. She was brought to all fours, painting desperately. From such a sight, Hajime turned away and looked at Yue, who was hugging his body while trembling.

He decided to talk to the three he trusted the most.

Yue, Shia, Kaori. You guy’s shouldn’t be that overtaken by a slime like this? You’re keeping things in control, right?

The three of them look up at Hajime, their cheeks stained red, their breath coming out in hot puffs as they cling to him desperately.

“Nn... is natural.”

“uu, of course, yoo- “

“It’s okay. I’m fine!”

They resisted the intense desire that tempted them to devote themselves to pleasure. Yue and the others were keeping it together with clenched teeth. After a look at the girls, Hajime laughs with satisfaction.

“This is one of the disgusting trials prepared for the great labyrinth. If you think for a second you can’t take it, look at the others. Don’t lose to them, it’d be embarrassing?”

Amongst his speech, Yue’s mouth distorted into a fearless smile.

“There is a way to fix this immediately, of course. I’m holy water to drink. That would quickly change out state. There are no things that can’t be released. How about...”

Hajime and the two others respond at the same time before she can finish talking.

“... unnecessary.”

“I do not need.”

“I don’t need that.”

They decided to get over the trial without any help. If “help” was “that”. Hajime gave a soft look. Yue, Shia, and Kaori give him happy smiles, because Hajime believed in them.

He still tried to help by keep a distance between the three women. This wasn’t something that would be easy for them to endure.

However...

“Hajime hug is gone...” Yue whined.

“It isn’t harder for you?”

“It’s harder not to embrace Hajime.”

“As she said, because the heart calms down... so please...” Shia added.

Hajime thought that it’d be a problem if he held them, but found himself holding all three in his arms. On his right arm is Shia, his left his Kaori, and Yue was held in the front on his lap.

They occasionally trembled with shivers, but Yue and the others devoted themselves to controlling their rough breathing and finally began to feel relief.

If they concentrated with their eyes closed, they could maintain and balance their spirit. Soon, the three excited women body temperatures began to drop and their heartbeats returned to normal. They seemed to be able to whether this trial without a problem as well. Hajime avoided moving his body even slightly as to not stimulate them. He smiled a little and kept supporting the three woman.

“I like this master, may your mistress also come over there?” Tio speaks up.

“Clearly that’s a joke... Ms. Clarce.”

“I’m falling down... oh, so cold. I’m done for.”

Chapter 130: Black Devil

The “saint shield” barrier finally dissipated as the outside blaze consumed the remainder of the tar and extinguished. The only remaining vegetation adhered to a strangely metallic ground covered with ash. It looked like an apocalyptic landscape.

“...Hmm?”

“How’s everyone?”

“Oh?”

Hajime sat in the middle of the burnt out wasteland with Yue, Shia, and Kaori holding him tightly with their eyes closed. They each opened their eyes in turn and tilted their heads.

“Oh? What’s the matter?”

Hajime asked with a worried voice as he noticed a strange look on Yue. Yue and the other girls looked at each other, acknowledging that they all had recovered before nodding and turning to Hajime.

“...Nn, we endured.”

“Yes, the pleasure seems to be gone.”

“I also don’t feel anything, I’m back to my senses.”

It seems to be that way.

They seemed to have endured the aphrodisiac effect of the milky slime that took their sanity with their mental strength. Excessive pleasure wasn’t all that different from pain. Hajime couldn’t imagine how much Yue and the others had suffered from an attack unlike any other they’ve ever experienced.

Hajime praised the three of them for doing a good job passing the labyrinth’s ordeal.

“As expected, all three of you did a good job. I was worried for a bit but I’m glad you’re okay.”

“Nn... Kufufu.”

“Ehehehe, it’s embarrassing to be told that so forwardly.”

“It’s thanks to Hajime-kun. It was your support that allowed me to endure.”

Hajime no longer had to hug the three as they were no longer under the effect of the aphrodisiac. Nevertheless, they didn’t let go as they grew gitty over being praised by Hajime.

Hajime tried to loosen his grip assuming it’d be alright by now, but Yue responded by hugging him even stronger.

Did they need more praising? The three girl looked upward at Hajime with blushing cheeks while they clang to him even more aggressively. They didn’t wear expressions that suggested they had lost their sanity. However, those expressions hold a certain allure of their own.

When they were under the aphrodisiac effect, it was easy for Hajime to reject their approaches, but it was a bit more difficult to resist Yue’s charm when she meant it. He gave up trying to get his arms back.

Then...

“Gohon! Sorry to interrupt you, but since we’re all better now I was wondering if you might untie Kouki and the rest?”

“Oh yeah? You did well too. You managed to make it without help. Indeed, a swordsman? Is this one of those spirit unification techniques?”

“Oh, Shizuku. Ehehe, I’m sorry, At the same time... my Shizuku-chan!”

After everything was over, it looked like Shizuku had managed to escape the pleasurable hell at the same time as Yue and the others, but had a haggard expression when she saw the pink space the group had made beside her. The interruption had managed to disrupt the mood and turn the group back to normal.

The girls who had been basking in Hajime’s praise turned away, slightly embarrassed.

“Oh, thank you. Well, I was able to keep calm since my father

hammered self-control into me since a young age during fencing. But it was a little dangerous. I mean, I wonder if things would have turned out this way if Kouki and the rest weren't constrained. I survived because I had the room to concentrate, without having to worry about defending myself. Thank you, Nagumo-kun. "

"That's good to hear. The pleasure could have knocked you unconscious. Enduring pleasure in place of pain could do that. While I prepare, Yaegashi, you might want to fix your clothes and mud situation."

"Clothes? Mud? Oh... yeah. I understand."

At first, Shizuku did not understand what Hajime had meant, but when she glanced down at herself she noticed that a change of clothes was in order. (It was sweat, Shizuku was just covered in sweat!) She blushed at the comment, nodding tightly.

Hajime used his transmutation to create several simple dressing rooms built from a wall of soil. The "Treasure room" had changes of clothing for Kouki and Ryuutaro as well (clothes bought in town). He took them out and tossed one over to Shizuku. Hajime collected the Bora Cursed Objects from Kouki's group, releasing them.

Kouki's group immediately drop. Shizuku managed to catch Suzu before she hit the ground, but Kouki and Ryuutaro collapsed to the ground with a rather painful noise. It was the hero and his sidekick, so Hajime had no worries.

While the female teammates used water magic to clean up and changed their clothing, Hajime concentrated on collecting all the spider golems.

They had finished destroying the ground around the immediate vicinity. There would be no Milky Slime coming out of the ground in surprise this time. These extra measures seemed necessary after the amount of time the milky slimes has previously wasted.

"You... master. I wouldn't mind if you looked at this mistress. There is no need for a locker room." At that point, a voice timidly came from behind.

Tio had managed to break through the aphrodisiac effect readily even though she had received the most slime.

Hajime recalls the fact and glances back at Tio.

“Were you still there, Ms. Clarce?”

“!? Please, Master! Are you still doing that? It was certainly pleasant, to begin with, but can you go back to the usual way of naming me!”

“That, what are you even talking about? As usual, Ms. Clarce is Ms. Clarce. Please don’t get any closer to me.”

“!!!!? Please, Master. I’m getting too excited. I’m repenting, please turn back!”

“……”

As Tio crawls up to his feet and scratches at his shoe, Hajime looks away and ignores her. The distant attitude by calling her with her last name and treating her like she was invisible was unbearable for Tio. Hajime was happy about this, Tio seemed genuinely saddened by this treatment, it looked like he found an effective punishment whenever she acted up.

Tio was trembling as she watched Hajime. By any chance, did Hajime go too far? Her look was becoming more and more tearful.

“This is a terrible master. I ask... call me Tio.”

Hajime had dealt a blow to stunt Tio’s abnormal behavior at last; it was a very satisfactory feeling.

However, Tio’s rueful appearance wasn’t the transformation Hajime was hoping for, destroying her beautiful appearance in her deteriorating kimono. Hajime’s devious heart considered things a little more, whether he punished her objectively, it seemed to be the role of a master. Happy or not, she wasn’t aware of it.

“It’s pointless, Tio. It’s already too late for you to change the kind of person you are, so at least be a little prudent.”

While Hajime shrugged while saying so, Tio was dumbfounded. Her

expression brightened, and she gave a smile that looked like it belonged to a sweet, young girl. That smile was beautiful enough to tug on even Hajime's heartstrings.

She was knowledgeable and could have some deep thoughts, understanding the subtleties of the human mind. Understanding someone and making an effort when she could have lost her composure. She had courage and decisiveness, unmatched combat strength. She was affectionate and kept her word. And her appearance was the best. If it wasn't for her abnormality, you could say she was a "perfect woman".

"Really, it is a shame... Because in a sense, I..."

"?"

It seemed like Hajime had opened a new door for Tio. He felt partially responsible for her abnormality but he was helpless to fight it.

"What's is it? Master..."

"...No, nothing. Go get changed and freshen up."

"Yikes, it's a... That's okay then, master? For me to change right here in the corner?"

When Hajime planned for Tio to use the makeshift changing room, Tio gave an expectant look and said such a thing.

Hajime's cheek twitched as he wondered "where's that prudence?" and pulled out a grenade.

"...How about this? It's a special present for you. It'll blow the dirt away along with your skin!"

"!? I get it. I'll go change my clothes immediately!"

Tio waved her hands and dived into the dressing room. While watching Tio's back, a Ryujin that had fallen pitifully beyond repair, for some reason the word 'responsibility' flashed through Hajime's mind. He shook his head to drive the character out of his mind.

Others began to emerge from the dressing room after cleaning themselves. Sure enough, Kouki, Suzu, and most of all Ryuutaro emerged

with downtrodden looks. They were all hunched as if burdened by unbearably heavy stones, and the atmosphere was wrapped with dark clouds as if magic was being used.

Although they had lost their sanity during the aphrodisiac effect, they seemed to remember what they'd done. Pleasure followed by hell, it seemed that Tio was right when she predicted this would try the bonds of relationships, Kouki's group seemed proof of that.

Ryuutaru and Kouki couldn't meet the girl's eyes and Suzu seemed determined to keep her distance. Suzu kept to the shadows with their heads down and red ears. Hajime feared he'd need to follow up with Suzu if they couldn't figure things out on their own.

Because they nearly sexually assaulted each other, it made them uncomfortable and provided a sense of guilt that couldn't be ignored. In particular, Suzu was a girl. The fact that she could have started that kind of relationship with her peer caused a certain kind of damage to her spirit.

"Let's just forget it, Suzu...? It was unavoidable. Things didn't go too far... so... There are one or two memories no one wants to remember, probably..."

"…. Shizu, Shizu."

"Look! Remember that time I was wondering around the dirty game section without noticing what was for sale? It was serious, the male customers around were all looking at me with judgmental eyes... and I became depressed..."

"Is…. Shizu interested in dirty games?"

"That's not it! That was an unfortunate accident!"

"Shizu investigating dirty games... kufufu, with a serious look... pukuku."

"It is terrible to laugh, Suzu."

Shizuku looked somewhat relieved now that Suzu was laughing.

It seemed like any comfort would work to overcome the dark history sealed in people's memories, and "sympathy of embarrassment" was a self-torture ingredient necessary to help Suzu's spirit recover a bit.

As expected of Shizuku, willing to sacrifice herself. It was admirable!

Kouki had his head down, so Suzu watched him.

"Nagumo cared for everyone. We should be thankful he stopped us."

"Yes, you're right. We were saved by Nagumo. I'm serious. Thank you very much." Ryuutaro who seemed to be uncomfortable following Kouki turned his eyes to Hajime and expressed his thanks.

"Be thankful. Make sure to remember that. Always be conscious of your debt. So that when you're better, you can return it to me by resolving to be an appropriate meat shield. If I make a mistake, it'll be fine. Because I'll go to the ends of the Earth to make sure you repay it."

Hajime came off more like a Yakuza business lending out money at 11 to 1. When someone skipped a payment, they really did go to any length to make them pay. A thank you didn't seem to be the kind of payment he was looking for.

The church or someone like Nointo might want Kouki's party to become his enemy (no matter how hopeless). So he wanted to keep them conscious of the debt, just in case.

But not really knowing what was on Hajime's mind, Kouki's group had twitching cheeks and disturbed expressions like cheat victims who had just found themselves consumed by an unreasonable debt.

It certainly made a big debt in that sense unless they could stop relying on Hajime. They recognized that and gave each other a silent nod.

However, the awkwardness seemed to clear up after the speech that trampled the common sense of Hajime.

The thought of the debt collector coming to make unreasonable demands seemed to inspire Kouki and Ryuutaro, and apparently Suzu and Shizuku as well. In a sense, they felt unity over not wanting to be

consumed by debt, burying the break between them a bit.

Without being attacked by any more Milky slimes, they advanced across the wasteland with ease and finally arrived at the giant tree. They gathered at the entrance and stepped into the next magic circle.

The place where Hajime and company appeared was as expected. However, the light being emitted from it was different from usual. There was a doorway leading to the outside and it was open from the beginning.

Hajime glanced around, seeing that he wasn't missing a single member. The magic eye could not detect the present of any fakes. In other words, they needed to proceed as is.

Hajime cautiously moved forward towards the exit bathed in light as Hajime gave everyone else a nod.

"This is... like Fair Bergen." Hajime looks ahead and nods as so.

Yue and the others had similar impressions and nodded.

Ahead of the cave exit was an aisle, or rather a huge branch that could easily be mistaken for an aisle. When Hajime glanced back, he could see a huge wooden trunk that went back so far he couldn't see the end. In other words, the empty cave came at the root of a branch that Hajime and the others were on.

The tree was too big, and the branch made a 5 meter across the aisle just as it is. Other big branches protrude from the tree intertwining here and there. It was an air corridor in the same way as Fair Bergen.

Unlike Fair Bergen, it was a single branch growing from the tree and intertwine to make the airspace, as opposed to several groupings of branches.

If you look up, there is a stone ceiling, so they were definitely still underground. This tree branch was likely part of the Great Tree as Hajime couldn't imagine there being any other giant trees like this.

"...Great Tree?"

“It’s likely this is a space just under the Great Tree.”

“But the Great Tree is visible on the ground.”

“Well, it seems to have grown branches below the ground. The real roots might be much deeper underground. We only see the tip that’s visible, it might be just a small part.”

“How big does the Great Tree get?”

Overtaken by the mind-boggling enormity of the Great Tree, it was almost too great to contemplate. The ceiling obstructed the view ahead, but Hajime still imagined the tree towering above them.

Shia’s rabbit ears twitched and began to move. Shia appeared to pick up some kind of sound. Shia wondered “What’s that sound?” and set out to verify the identity while walking the distance of the branch.

The faint sound was leathery and her ears flopped around with disgust. Shia frowned as her Usamimi picked up the sound, an imperceptible sound that sent goosebumps across her skin. She peered over the edge cautiously.

“? Dark and invisible, that’s it.”

‘What’s the matter?”

“I’m hearing a somewhat unpleasant sound, but it’s too dark for my eyes…”

“You want me to look for you?”

“Yes, thank you. What is that? The sound of such a feeling, like wriggling.”

“I understand, something that sounds disgusting?”

Hajime glanced over the edge on the left of the branch passage after Shia called. Certainly, the darkness could not be pierced at this particular height, but with “night eyes” and “far vision” it wouldn’t be a problem for Hajime.

“…!?”

First, Hajime couldn't see anything, but as he narrowed his eyes doubtfully he gave out a cry that couldn't be voiced. He looked up, his face blue and his expression giving away the danger.

"Ha, Hajime!? What's wrong? To see you react so much. What exactly did you see?"

"...Hajime, okay?"

Hajime was the height of fearless arrogance and boldness. For Hajime's face to display fear gave something very difficult to imagine. Yue anxiously rubbed Hajime's back. Shia was holding his hand gently.

Hajime finally recovered as a bit of warmth and murmured while trembling and overlooking everyone with a serious look.

."...The devil is there..."

"Demon?" x5

Everyone inclined their necks at Hajime's pointless words. Kouki and Ryuutaro turned their eyes from Hajime, who to them looked most like the devil himself, to declare something else a devil, gave them watery eyes.

"Yes, it's a devil. It's black and you know it well..."

When he said only that, Hajime pulled out a crossbit and sent it down. A small crystal was put up so that everyone could see.

The things which reflected in the light right in front of Yue and others was...

"!?" x5

If you find one, there is at least thirty more. It bears the name of the black devil, having been feared with the word initials G. Always creeps, rustling by chaos, life force causing it to doggedly survive, struggling in the shadows moving at high speed. If you are flying in the air, the Earth, enemy of the strong which cause abnormalities in a state of confusion and panic in restaurants, they are soldiers of unique magic.

The name of... cockroach.

The cockroach is, at the bottom of this underground space, millions, several tens of millions, no their wriggling had no measurement. It was an incomparable sea of cockroaches. The leathery unpleasant sound was the sound of cockroaches rubbing against each other.

"So, what things... look..."

"Yeah, so many, lots and lots."

With blue faces, Suzu and Shizuku look away as well. They both had goosebumps on their arms. The other members were pretty much the same. In particular, Shia's rabbit ears were now hanging down, she was desperate to cover up the sound now that she knew what it was. She buried her head in her hands and squatted down, her eyes teary.

"....Hajime, will burn them."

Yue unusually says a dangerous thing, but Tio and Kaori seemed to already have the same intention. Their desire to see the things destroyed were indicated by the look in the eyes and the goosebumps on their skin.

"It might be better to stop... that number? I suggest... what if they flew in large quantities?"

"....." x3

Thousands of cockroaches coming flying up all at once at them, Hajime proposed. Yue lost her fighting spirit, and her face changed into a complicated expression. Apparently, the heart was broken in an instant.

"If we don't fall, I think it's okay. I think... as... I'll advance first and stop any that come up quickly. It might only attack when we stop."

Everyone wore a more serious expression that they previously had at Hajime's words, they gave firm nods.

Hajime traveled out on top of the thick branch passage. For now, there was only the goal of advancing along the road, but since the place was major scaffolding, there appeared to be a joined branch passage in the distance which he supposed was where he was going to aim.

Along the way, the roaches had not jumped up or been startled and they

had made it from the entry branch to the next branch aisle. Things looked good, and then...

A feared sound was heard.

Vu... vuvuvuvuvuvuvuvuvuvu!!!

It was flapping sounds, in a large amount.

"!?"

Hajime who confirms with a look below. Sure enough, a brown tsunami was coming stretching out and rising as flapping hordes of cockroaches emerged with a furious spectacle.

"Uo... it's covered!!"

"Hey, oh, oh-oh!!"

"Hyiii!!"

"Come now, oh, oh!"

"—-!!"

Everyone was raising cries of disgust as they prepared for the biggest attack of their lives.

Hajime shot rockets from Orukan. Yue used her "thunder dragon", Shia fought with burst slug ammunition out of the Doryukken, Tio invoked breath, and Kaori released decomposition while Kouki's group used whatever long distance attacks they could muster.

Blooming flowers of crimson perched below, roars of thunder. Spreading ripples of blue light, cut blank flashes of black and silver. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to declare overwhelming annihilation. If this force was put in front of the kingdom and the imperial army, surely, they would oblige to leave this world.

However, the attack didn't dent the mountainside of blossoming black tsunami coming towards them. Attacking the sea itself is the same as pointless. The tsunami of cockroaches jumped freely in the movement spread throughout space as birds do in perfect order.

“It is terrible! Holy shield!””

Already half crying, Suzu put up a barrier.

Shortly after, the Zaa Aaaa continued move up into the sky. A wave of cockroaches descended as if attracted by gravity and pounced towards Hajime’s party.

The roaches hit the walls, the momentum causing tons to smoosh and sprinkle their fluids as the survivors crawl all over the barrier wall.

“No, ri...”

Suzu’s barrier stretched under the weight and she started to lose consciousness. Kouki resists losing heart and tries to give out an encouraging voice over the desperation.

“Suzu, don’t pass out. If you become unconscious we all die. Keep up your spirit!”

Which was part of the attack. To be swallowed by the wave of cockroaches in flesh and blood, but it’s an attack on the spirit as much as a magical attack. These kind of abnormalities couldn’t be avoided. On the contrary, they could traumatize you for life.

“Yue, take over the defense!”

“...Nn, will absolutely not be broken.”

Yue deployed her holy shield to superimpose the one Suzu had raised up with an arm covered in goosebumps. The outside of the barrier was stained black with cockroaches crawling and rustling.

“Somehow, it has been like this since I came to this labyrinth.”

“Extremely messy huge labyrinth. Well, this one assumes you’ve beaten several of these others and have obtained their cheats so it raises the difficulty up several steps.”

“It would be very difficult if you did not have time to analyze things calmly.”

“Kaori, it’s okay, there is no problem. That out there is just a black

sesame thing. Black sesame pudding or black sesame furikake and I quite like it. Especially black sesame furikake seasoning soy sauce flavored. That's delicious. Rice is great."

"Shizuku-chan! Oh no! I broke the already fragile Shizuku-chan."

Kaori gives a heartbreaking cry as Shizuku's pupils go dead. Meanwhile, Hajime reaches into the "treasure room" and starts preparing for extermination while rubbing the goosebumps on his arms.

However, before that happens.

The cockroaches that flocked to the barrier drew in unison. The wave of cockroach in front of everything move into a sphere of air, producing a circular ring to surround the center.

Superimposed further circular rings on the outer periphery of the giant circular ring form. The next cockroach column begins to sequence around the ring. Gradually, the sight begins to form a geometric pattern created in the air. Hajime's cheek twitched.

"Hey, Hey, Hey, believe it or not. Are they forming a magic circle?"

Once a magic circle was formed by Nointo handling and lining up its silver feathers formerly in the air. The countless cockroaches were now doing the same thing. Hajime and the other's declared "how gross" and continued their attack simultaneously.

However, the wave of cockroaches lay ahead so that the spear in the center of the magic circle was maintained.

It'll be a meat wall literally, and Hajime's and the others attacks were obstructed. A dead body of the cockroaches where were blown away fell in a torrential downpour into the lower part, but this did not decrease the number at all.

While continuing to fight in this way, the magic circle seemed to be completed. Close to fifteen meters in diameter it floated in the air, a magic circle emitting light of intense red and black. And when it burst the next moment, a central sphere which consists of cockroaches began to rise and change shape. It was a huge cockroach of about three meters

at full length, at last.

But rather than taking the oval form as cockroaches around it, it came with a needle-like tail and a torso similar to a centipede, complete with 10 legs. Its front feet had sharp finger like knives. The face had black color eyes, and a sharp chin, along with three pairs, six total translucent wings. Perhaps this was a monster of the boss class.

“Gigi Chchichichichichichi chip!!!”

The boss cockroach wore dark red phosphorescent color and emits unpleasant cries. Then the cockroaches gathered around further, beginning to for another magic square. Apparently, the boss cockroach could control the other cockroaches. A rather small sphere begins to be formed, plenty in the center of a new magical center. It isn’t the boss cockroach, but it’s clear that a special cockroach appears big.

“Tch... what to do?”

“....Nn!?”

Suddenly a torrent of the magic generated the moment Hajime and Yue tried to make an attack on the magic circle from their footing.

The both turned their eyes down immediately, but there was nothing in a branch aisle to hold. However, his magic eye caught that further down the branch aisle, on the other side of the aisle, out of sight, the cockroaches were forming another magic circle.

It was trying to focus their attention on it, probably forming a magic flash to hide the other circle. Bad Hajime! It was actuated already the moment Hajime realized that.

Red and black magic was transmitted through the branch passage along the scaffold. Hajime protected his face from the intense light. After the flash exploded, it wrapped the surrounding region and settled there. Hajime and the others appeared intact.

What on earth was it? Hajime looked next to him to Yue while suspecting.

“……”

The feeling that welled up within Hajime at that moment was not relief for her safety and was not the usual love, it was…

–It was hate.

Chapter 131: Was Something Reversed?

Disgust, no, the best word was hatred. Such a deep, dark feeling, Hajime felt for... Yue.

It was apparent that Yue felt the same way. Her eyes were distorted with a murderous look as she glanced at Hajime as well.

“Yue.”

“.... Hajime.”

They called each other’s names with familiarity, but with a sort of discomfort as well.

“... I completely despise you.”

“.... I feel nothing but hate.”

With strong emotion, the pair pull out weapons and raise them at each other. Hajime aims Donna straight at Yue’s forehead, while Yue lifts up a flame in her right hand. The words “Oh?” and “Who first?” hung in the air like a classic scene in a Yakuza shop.

“Hey, what are you two doing?”

A voice came forth between the two. It was Shia. Her left shoulder holding Doryukken, her posture like she was about to attack, with a very restrained voice.

“Shouldn’t the one you want to kill be me? Don’t be selfish.”

Like Hajime and Yue, Shia stared at them with hate and malice in her eyes.

Hajime also had negative feelings towards Shia that rivaled the murderous feeling he had for Yue. When Hajime gritted his teeth and looked around, he felt death glares from Tio and Kaori as well. They looked at Yue, Shia, and Hajime all with hate-filled eyes.

“Oh, hey guys. What are you guys doing? Nagumo is just Nagumo.”

It’s Kouki. Kouki seems to be protecting Hajime while giving Yue and

the others a stern glare. His eyes seem to hold a great deal of affection for Hajime as he accuses the others of acting strange.

Ryuutaro and Suzu did not seem to share any particular strong feelings against Hajime. Rather, Ryuutaro seemed to be giving Kouki a look of disgust. Shizuku also seems to have hate in her eyes when she looks at Hajime, and a condemning look for Kouki, and a downright murderous look for Kaori.

Fortunately, the "holy shield" barrier was still being maintained by Yue. The swarm of roaches had surged again, trying to catch Hajime and rest off-guard during this abnormality, as the group just glared at each other.

More cockroaches gather into magic circles, attempting to create more special cockroaches outside their protective barrier. Another tsunami of cockroaches flies by, buying them a bit of time.

Hajime analyzed the effect of the light magic using "detect magic" and judged it against his changing emotions to take a guess at the situation now.

"Apparently, the light magic we felt a moment ago seems to have reversed our emotions. The intensity is proportional to the strength of the original emotion."

"... Nn, reasonable conclusion, I unwillingly agree."

Hajime explains without turning away; Yue agrees with a disgusted look. Even though the feeling is reversed, they didn't lose their memories. By inferring from memory how they original thought about each other, it was likely the correct guess.

While holding angry looks, no one else raised an objection.

"The extent of this trial... You can still remember, but the emotion has been reversed. It's difficult to shake off what you remember versus how you feel. It's a disgusting ordeal. The deeper the bond, the more it'll try to tear it apart."

As Tio explained the extent of this trial, she started blushing as she watched the cockroaches crawling on the outer wall, clogging her words.

The allure of the cockroaches seem to jam up every one's words; it was Kaori who managed to put it into words.

"…. look so pretty."

So that was also a problem. For the black devils that they would hold as enemies, the hate was flipped. Instead of being repulsed, Hajime and the others only felt endeared by the cockroaches. It was only their memories of disliking them that kept their guard up.

Their emotions were inverted. They needed no more evidence to support that conjecture. The allies with the deepest bonds would be cut, their capacity to defend themselves weakened by their hatred. That might be the goal. Especially against these demonic cockroaches, they certainly had to hold on to their disgust.

With the group unable to cooperate, they'd be swallowed by the tsunami of cockroaches, or fall prey to the medium-sized ones about 1 meter in length. These boss cockroaches were being produced one after another.

It wouldn't go amiss to call this a desperate situation. … However, the current people here were far from ordinary.

"… It's the mountains of cockroaches I want to kill."

"… I'd like to kill them, as well as you."

Hajime and Yue stared out at the cockroaches. Their eyes seemed to penetrate through the cockroaches pressed up against the outer wall, contemplating on the boss cockroach that had created this situation.

"… More than that."

"… Than that."

Hajime and Yue's eyes flashed with brutal glare. Yue, who usually doesn't show much expression, wore an aggressive look like that of a wild wolf, her eyes narrowed. Dwelling in those eyes was a fierce anger like never before.

"I like to love… man, I want to kill!"

"…. I want to love him and be cherished."

Two heads reached a boil.

Their anger gushed out, hot like magma. They remembered how they had previously felt for each other. The cockroaches had messed with their feelings. No one should trifle with those important feelings between two people in love.

Even against roaches, dislike and anger weren't enough to describe the ferocity that they felt for the cockroaches, something that changed to something sadistic. The feelings grew to a bitterness over the nature of the entire labyrinth up to this moment as well.

And Hajime and Yue weren't the only ones.

Kouki and the others flinched from the pressure of the overwhelming anger emitted from Hajime and Yue, causing them to retreat. But behind them, Shia, Tio, and even Kaori wore eyes red with anger that could only be described as demonic.

Yue opened up the "Holy Barrier", causing Kouki and the others to caste looks of skepticism and panic. Red magic began to spread out from Hajime's feet. His lip is lifted, his canine exposed, and a look of absolute murder on his face.

Shortly after,

Zudooon!!

Hajime leaped from the passage like a single bullet, the roar leaving behind a crater in the middle of branch where his feet previously were. Using an ability like "ground shrink", mixed with "enhanced legs" and "impact change", his body moved like a bomb with body reinforcement of pure magic. The "body reinforcement" was applied to the whole body, making him harder than steel, and his body was covered in "Lightning Clad" and red magic, appearing like the embodiment of thunder.

Unable to stop Hajime, Suzu's "Holy Barrier" was easily destroyed from the inside like waste paper. Hajime rushes the boss cockroach with the intent to destroy it.

“I’ll love you until death.”

The boss cockroach couldn’t even react, its visual recognition unable to match the speed of Hajime moving like a madman with a screw loose.

Suddenly, the cockroach didn’t seem so dangerous. Maybe it was because they reverse their feelings, or didn’t expect someone to sneak out during the siege of cockroaches, but this demon boss seemed rather... simple?

Hajime, as the weapon he was, took out his anger on the cockroach, delivering a fatal blow, using the momentum of his rush combined with a knee kick.

GAAAAAAN

With the resounding roar of steel on steel, the boss cockroach disappeared a second later, Hajime appearing in its spot. The boss cockroach had blown away at an unperceivable speed.

Hajime remained in place using the “aerodynamic” to stand still, receiving the glares and murderous intent as he looked at the direction the boss cockroach was blown away.

On the other side, once Hajime had taken off....

Suzu was panicking, desperately trying to bring back the barrier that he had taken out. However, the cockroaches that drew near no longer disgusted her. Was there a good reason to stay away from the cockroaches? In fact, aren’t they desirable? While thinking this, she lost to the spell.

The cockroaches in this labyrinth are just insects... after all.

Yue stood up to fill the fatal gap in Suzu’s actions to rectify the situation.

“Shaking heaven.”

Around Yue and the others, space itself seemed to wave for a moment. She had started to show the full extent of her god-level magic.

Just as the wave of cockroaches was about to reach them, Space began

to explode. The tremendous power generated shock waves that crushed into the cockroaches, crushing them in small pieces, and a moment later only sand remained.

Yue was not finished yet. “Five Heaven Dragons.”

The moment that magic name sounded from her lovely voice, thunder, the blue flame, the storm, the snow and ice, the five bodies of dragons appeared. As tens of thousands of cockroaches rushed towards them, Yue’s dragons circled around them with a distinctive roar and were decimated in an instant.

Yue began to float up with the use of her gravity magic without a glance back to the others. Her body began to rush towards the boss cockroach along with the whole body of the dragon in free fall.

As a formation of 200 medium-sized cockroaches made an attack formation against Hajime, Shia blew it away.

Shia, Tio, and Kaori had all realized, much like Yue in the beginning, that their affection for Hajime had been played with. The cockroaches looming above who had chosen to reverse their emotions were met with a fierce anger raging beyond the intentions of the labyrinth. (Translation Note: In other words, don’t mess with the dere or you get the yan.)

Shia lept into the air with magically reinforced legs, scampering across the sky on light blue disks that rippled with beautiful blue light. Also, Tio and Kaori respectively expanded their dragon wings and sliver wings from their backs, leaping up at once as they met glares with the mid-sized cockroaches.

“Oh, hey, I no longer find you repugnant. However, I’ve still decided that you die.”

“That, That’s right. Bug-chan is cute but... I can’t die, and I have to fight as expected, don’t I?”

“Yes, but decapitate them? Such dear creatures?”

“If we don’t kill, then we’ll be killed. We must be strong, and fight strong, so that we aren’t left behind.”

Though, it's shameful to say that to them, the Cockroaches might as well have been a Chihuahua staring at them with round eyes as they tried to aim for its neck. It was like trying to kill a small dog that you'd loved from birth. It was these messed up and crazy inconsistencies that they had to deal with, but couldn't help but think that way.

The remaining people from Kouki's party couldn't fly freely through the sky, stranding them at the center of the branch passage. They began to fight passively. They battled side by side and shoulder to shoulder with people they didn't like. It was a troublesome feeling.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

The boss cockroach that had received Hajime's flying knee kick had flown off into the trunk of the big tree, sinking magnificently and being blown to bits by the furious momentum. An abdomen that would have taken pride as having the strength of steel was pounded radially centering on the part that received the direct hit, whitish body fluid spilling out from the newly formed hole.

"Gichichichichichichichi!"

The boss cockroach made an unpleasant cry sound while swinging its antennae. A group of cockroaches immediately swarm around the boss cockroach, dissolving into its form in an instant, assimilating and curing the injury the boss had sustained. As long as the small cockroaches remained, they'd be able to keep fighting indefinitely.

The boss cockroach picks out a splinter that had embedded itself into the cockroach from the big tree. The cockroach seems bigger now as it lets out an unpleasant sound.

The cockroach eyes glanced around for the one who injured him...

"Still, let me enjoy this a bit more."

It seemed like hitting the abdomen just cured the impact further. The roaring sound once again came as steel struck steel. Hajime had quietly approached from the side and send in a Yakuza style kick.

The boss cockroach sinks into the trunk again. Hajime began to attack
~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

it mercilessly like a wild beast. Do not use weapons. Hajime had no intention on ending the moment. Applying a “magic shockwave” to his fist and reinforcing his body with magic, he quickly undercuts the bosom of the boss cockroach with another and then another.

Dugong! Dugong!

Every time a fist in Hajime’s left or right struck, the form of the boss cockroach twists like a toy, but seems unable to escape, its body being embedded into the cracking trunk of the big tree radially. The cockroach is replaced with a glossy black piece of meat and white blood mixed in shattered wood chip.

The boss cockroach was a foe where even if a physiological hate could be held, its form was too dreadful, although it only looked pathetic in its current form.

A moment later red and black light began to emit from the boss cockroach. A great deal of cockroaches appeared in the route behind Hajime’s back, and with a dreadful speed they formed into a magic circle.

Black smoke emerged from the magic circle, overflowing and assaulting Hajime with furious speed.

“…. Tsh.”

Hajime judged that being touched by the black smoke was bad and evacuated with “aerodynamic” and “ground shrink” before it reach him. Where Hajime was an instant before, smoke wrapped around the boss cockroach and the great tree.

With a moment free of Hajime, the boss calls for a group of cockroaches. A large amount of cockroaches rush into their own black smoke.

After a few seconds, the boss cockroach regained its form, removing the wounds and shaking off the black smoke. The tree behind the cockroach that had been exposed to black smoke had collapsed, seeping down the trunk as a gray mush. Apparently, the black smoke had some kind of corrosive effect.

The boss cockroach's six wings began to shake at a high speed, BIIIIII! The boss cockroach took off at high speed. Hajime entered high speed flight to give the cockroach his regards once again, quickly overshadowing it simultaneously as the cockroach assumed a posture of struggle.

The accelerating Hajime circles around the cockroach again and rushes, blocking off its retreat. At the same time, a tsunami of cockroaches begin to slope up behind Hajme. While giving the cockroaches a smile as if he was saying "What is it, cutie?" he jerks out his left arm, he drew out some weapons. He had a mind to attack from the front while letting the cross bit attack from behind.

A wall of air appeared around the boss cockroach. It had made it to the speed of sound. They didn't know if the branch passages would give way to the shockwave and vacuum and become destroyed. He also would be destroyed if he tried to avoid the tree at the last moment.

Still, Hajime showed no intention of leaving, even as the vibration smashed against his artificial arm. He attacked directly from the front.

Just then, a huge dragon of thunder and another clad in blue flames broke through the wall of cockroaches behind him and appeared.

Hajime feels it coming, and without looking back gives a face as if to say "Yuck." However, the cockroach is already in sonic speed. The 'blinking light' perceptive abilities were already being stretched many times, and it was already hopeless.

"Why, I was!"

He delivered a single blow. An outburst of the elbow and "magic shockwave" mixed with fire at the same time, struck the boss cockroach straight on. The cockroach was also stretching its leg with a clawlike

sharp blade, but was eluded completely with the intense cross counter. The face of the boss cockroach was pounded in detail with the effect of vibrations smashing and spreading across the creature in waves.

The impact on the front of the head caused the cockroach to round vertically and fly off in the direction of the day after tomorrow.

Immediately after, the roaches aiming for Hajime were consumed by Yue's dragons in the spot Hajime just was.

"…. Thank you, removed."

"Was that for me? Or those dear cockroach-kun."

"… Of course, the yellow cockroaches."

"Hey, what's that? I'm getting things going. It looks like a new cockroach species?"

Hajime moved next to Yue, wearing an unhappy face. Yue floats a very hateful smile towards Hajime disdainfully. Hajime, who held up through the offensive of the thunder dragon and the blue flame dragon while narrowly escaping floated a blue vein on his forehead, but where does the wind blow?

"Your intention was to kill me."

"… Of course not, at your level there was no reason to believe you'd be killed."

"Oh, certainly, but could you have attacked worse than that?"

The two wore an atmosphere of disgust towards each other, being in a state where they dislike each other more than anyone, that's the effects of the emotion reversal, yet still they were able to trust each other in combat.

The boss cockroach had approached the sonic speed while still wearing the black smoke of imperceptible corrosion. It turned out Yue could take it on easier from the front and engaged without thinking.

Furthermore, the large tsunami of cockroaches were approaching. If you looked closely, a small cockroach was wrapped in a black haze. The

boss cockroach draws near from Yue's side as the pair acknowledge the sea of corrosion.

"Hey you, that smoke decays everything. Don't let it touch your clothing or things might become erotic."

"... Perhaps for a rotten character like you. I'm sure I'm resistant."

They spit venom at each other without hesitation, cutting words at close range.

Meanwhile, the black smoke coalesced into a black tidal wave of corrosion around the boss cockroach moving at sonic speeds, targeting Yue and Hajime in a manner that was anything but disordered.

However, it seemed like the two couldn't be bruised.

The black smoke rushed in making a sonic boom, reaching out for the two people in front, and they instantly moved away, dancing around the streams of smoke as they glared at each other.

Their movements seemed impossible to follow, Hajime had drawn Donna and began firing while Yue used her finger as a baton, creating a dragon with the body of a tornado.

Six of Hajime's bullets shot out in a flash, landing in the forehead of the boss cockroach at the same place and time. The boss cockroaches head explodes, and which is blown off, sending it into a tailspin once again.

Meanwhile the black tidal wave was engulfed with the colors of five dragons. The thunder dragon left only remnants of roaches while the blue dragon annihilated them completely. The ice dragon froze them while the stone dragon petrified them, 100,000 at a time.

"You're playing through them quickly, will you run out?"

"... Even without material, I'll play."

While the cockroaches rain down like a torrential downpour, the boss continues to take in small cockroaches with each movement in a move that only feels desperate. Yue and Hajime's voices could be heard, looking up with crescent shaped mouths and laughter like devils.

It probably wasn't a conscious action. It was a more instinctual thing. It's instinctually realized that it touched a presence that should never ever be touched and became an enemy.

"Gigi iiii!!"

The boss cockroach clad in the black smoke of corrosion began to panic and gave a scream. More small cockroaches were called, and as they approached the boss they became clad in the black corrosion as well before compressing.

The smoke seems to compress into a black shell, creating hundreds of shots. And of course, the shells maintain the corrosive properties. So the boss was creating corrosive ammunition out of the small cockroaches. Effects of the instantaneous corrosion and compression left an uneven smoke.

The boss released a shockwave, sending out the corrosive shells which struck and corroded a branch aisle the moment it was pierced. It headed for Hajime and the rest rapidly.

"…. Wasteful."

Yue uttered a word. Shortly after, a gate forms right in front of Hajime and Yue and spreads. The spatial magic does a spatial field that becomes an invincible shield at the same time. The shell that would corrode anything the instant it lands, couldn't avoid passing through the developed gate and disappearing into somewhere. It's a perfectly wasteful ball as Yue had said.

But the boss cockroach, now in a complete state of panic can only half acknowledge that. Averting the orbit while screaming, it bypasses the gate to rush at Yue. However, the gate wasn't simply a place to banish the cannonballs away.

"Kyiii!?"

Just after increasing its speed and detouring, it struck something in the air, and as it was caught it became a whole body crucifixion.

"Its movements are simple. Is its mind still only that of a cockroach?"

Hajime murmurs so next to Yue as he makes his stone ring react.

The ring had been connected to the bola beforehand. The boss cockroach expected a route, its eyes on the gate while Hajime established the bola in the air simultaneously.

And the wire used for this bola is extra fine, so-called steel thread. Steel thread could be stretched as the effect given by generation magic "sign insulation" concealed an ore part of the bola, and a cobweb might be spread in the air.

The boss cockroach had rammed into the net, ready to catch it if the cockroach touched. And carefully, the bola matched the impact of the rush and entangled, securing the boss cockroach in the air as it is.

While spitting curses and strangely trusting each other, the pair continued to fight back to back without hesitation, sharing in the defense and attack without requiring a wink of conversation...

Were these guys really hating each other under the emotion reversal? If the boss cockroach could say words, it surely would have grandly Tsukkomi'd asking as such.

"I wonder, Yue..."

"... Hmm?"

Hajime inclines his neck while spearing the eye of the boss cockroach, continuing to harass it while it remained crucified in his web.

"I think my feelings of hate are starting to fade... it's about halfway gone now. I'm able to stand it."

"... coincidence. I also feel that Hajime is bearable. And with the cockroaches, I don't feel the need to love them."

"Oh, indeed."

Tio guessed that the emotion reversal was another trial of the great labyrinth. Like the pleasure hell that chooses viscous liquid of milky slime, Hajime also inferred that it could be conquered. After all, it'd be a troublesome place if you're feeling reverse could never be conquered and

you ended up hating your partners forever.

However, Hajime and Yue fought together to overcome it by nature, or so it seems.

Potential? After having your spirit upset by feeling the reversal, and the cruel treatment center filled with making the boss cockroach, the feeling of turning back may be tempting.

Alternatively, it may be that the two of them exerted a simple and mysterious ability of creating pink space anytime, anywhere.

In any case, it reminded Hajime of a quote about "every time not being a possibility" that certain working authorities once murmured.

"Well, Yue, since you're acting playfully, how about one last game with Mr. Cockroach?"

"... Nn. Winning is possible if you like your opponent."

Again, two people show a smile that could only come from a devil. Absolutely, are we sure they had a feeling's reversal? Is that really likely? An observer might have tsukkumi'd.

The boss cockroach has finished restoring its body and managed to sneak out of the bola's restriction with the use of the black smoke of corrosion. It wore black smoke and again produces three to six shock waves and a vacuum blade with a flap of its wings.

However, the boss cockroach shouldn't be negligent. Up to this moment, Hajime had been pulling his hand. He refused to use heinous weapons, no direct attacks by powerful magic. Not even attack while playing. He was playing to the full level.

Things that were not perceived were the complete lack of aggressive intention. Demon or not, the creatures body showed the miserable result.

Hajime appeared at the back of the boss cockroach, inserting centrifugal force with body strengthening, hammering down with an aerial turning kick into the back of the boss cockroach with an instant move.

“Giiiii!?”

The boss cockroach which made a noise curved like a shrimp with its shell in the air and blew away. The black smoke of corrosion should have been worn, but with Hajime covered in bright red magic, it did not seem to affect him at all.

Blown away at intense Gs, the boss cockroach desperately tried to regain its balance. Yue appears from a spatial change right in front of the boss cockroach, waving her had slightly in front of it.

Immediately after, space become Gyobo! A shock wave with some directionality makes a noise, and shrinks, and generates the power by which space turns back at the next moment.

“GIIII!?”

The boss cockroach which is assaulted by a dreadful impact from the front like a pinball this time blows off in the direction of the day after tomorrow. The surface of the body is ragged already, but that’s just the start.

Hajime had already moved position. Once again, an intense kick blows the cockroach away. Blown away, and still, to Yue, blown again. Back to Hajime.

Hajime and Yue hit each other, such as the air tennis with a boss cockroach ball. Echoing are the heartbreaking cries of the boss cockroach in the vast underground space. The boss is moving so fast and irregularly that the swarms of cockroaches are unable to have time to help.

The corrosive smoke doesn’t affect Hajime and doesn’t touch Yue to begin with. Yue’s body is able to repair any damage before she’s even aware, so there is no risk of dying.

Their play seems to be the doing of devils and fiends. Using up and playing with their love by this trial in the labyrinth might have turned them into such.

Further, a rule of the game is loss of the person who failed in the rally first.

“…. Hajime.”

And, in the middle of their rally, suddenly received sense talk from Yue. Because they are moving at high speed with changing distances, this was necessary. Hajime replies while flicking the boss cockroach with an overhead kick.

“What happened?”

“Oh,… Hajime.”

“Mm. What is it?”

“Hajime… Hajime… Hajime… Nn….”

Yue just kept calling Hajime’s name repeatedly by sense talk for a while. The tone seemed to be changing into something more spoiled like. Hajime begins to notice it in the tone. In the feeling.

“Yue, back?”

“… Nn… perfection. For Hajime?”

“Yes, me too… there is only pure malice for this cockroach any more, and for Yue…”

“…. Me?”

Hajime packs in a word without leaving a torrent of the feelings taken away. Such as having the opposite feeling for Yue even for just a moment. He didn’t want to think about it. The violent malice as well as the anger for the boss cockroach rose up once again, but he had to say the words to his sweetheart where there were once cruel words.

When he took a deep breath, Hajime used sense talk while looking at Yue, who had changed ahead of the boss cockroach and blew it straight for Hajime.

“There is only love.”

“Nn… me too.”

The voice that seems wonderful and sounds dear to Hajime. Feelings of thousands of emotions were included and the word floods through his

chest. Hajime and Yue stay in the air just as it is, saying only those words with patience even if it has to be seen. The boss cockroach with discharged body fluid flied overhead, but the two people's eyes don't look away. It was just Yue and Hajime.

They say nothing, when the distance between them disappear, and two people embrace in midair. Their lips meet naturally. Light kiss without words, only just touch, as if the thought was more than enough.

Hajime holds Yue's slender waist and Yue wraps her arm around Hajime. Their lips release as the two of them confirm that the feelings inside them are normal once again, staring close distance, with smiles on their faces.

The boss cockroach which had finished playing around at that point gave them some distraction. With a scream, it dispatched cockroaches which rised up simultaneously.

That won't be the light one such as tidal waves any more. They were forcibly trying to close the space with cockroaches. A huge dome began to form heading up towards Yue and Hajime. Hajime had long since lost track of what happened to Kouki and the others.

The dome was filled with black smoke of corrosion. When seen from the outside, the surface seemed to rustle, the mountain rising where it could be seen. The underground space where the big tree was made at the center was buried with a mountain of cockroaches, mostly.

The cockroaches had managed to accumulate not just at the bottom, but also the ceiling and walls as well. If someone said all the cockroaches in the world were gathered here, it'd not be surprising.

And the space was closing quickly with cockroaches in the next moment GoGYUUU! It was reduced quickly with the sounds that suggested so.

Will they be crushed to death or captured inside of the ocean of cockroaches? The center is of course Yue and Hajime. At the end of the underground space, there was Shia striking down a medium-sized cockroach and leaving it for Kouki's group to defeat. They also seem to

have exceeded the pile of cockroaches a short while ago. It also seems to come off from an area by a compressed thing.

The boss cockroach is entering a reduced sphere directly while flapping. Closed space of a hug cockroach was in the compressed state so that there were no gaps to the interior already.

“Gichichichichichichichi!”

The boss cockroach makes an unpleasant sound. That seemed to be an attempt to clear it’s former humiliation as a ball, and it seemed to be the roar convinced of a victory.

But that will be overturned immediately after. A cockroach was repelled from a spherical center, trying to find the dead body from the center of the sphere of cockroaches.

“Oh, you want a fervent embrace?”

Yue, putting both hands together, was seen there with her eyes closed to concentrate. Next to her is Hajime, who laughs dauntlessly within the 4 point barrier.

The boss cockroach stops, instinctively taking a step back.

The fear of being teased by these two people ran deep, but that’s because the power they exuded was feared above all else.

A gap formed that Yue could put out both hands together. They flash blue, and in the meantime a small group of flames begin to swirl around.

When seeing that, they seem to have just done the flame systems finest aggressive spell “blue sky”. When ordinarily thinking, making “blue sky” can excel in some small extermination. It’d seem like an insignificant act.

But genius magician Yue wouldn’t do such a nonsense thing.

The blue flame between the two hands, the splendor is increased from moment to moment. On the contrary, it kept burning. It’s as if looking to crate small stars.

“... Selection.” Yue muttered quietly.

Then, the finished fist-sized orb oozes blue aura.

The bead of blue flame which contains a power and identity that was unknown.

That one was for the boss cockroach. The cockroach realized it'd be completely destroyed. If not, they'd make it understand. The cockroach let out a scream, pushing cockroaches and black smoke against the four point boundary to break it and kill the pair and break the orb before it was too late.

However, the action was too late too. Well no, whatever action the cockroach would take would be the same thing. There's no way to stop it now.

Yue hung the blue flame orb towards the sky. Yue illuminated Blue Star gave its own appearance that was far too mysterious and beautiful. Hajime gently hugged Yue's body from behind. Yue had entrusted her back to Hajime to fawn after all.

And,

"... Divine flame."

Like the judgement of god himself, the pulsating blue overran the entire place.

Chapter 132: One Hope

Translation Note: FYI, When Tio talks, the MTL translate it that she refers the Hajime as “Husband” and herself as his “concubine” or “whore”. I’ve been changing it to “Master” and “Mistress” because I think it fits the S&M theme a little better as well as the other translations.

* * *

“Divine Flame,” she commanded in a pretty voice edged with cruelty.

Shortly after, the function of the annihilation magic became apparent.

The blue flame began to pulsate with a Dukan sound. Blue light spread around the underground space and began to swell from inside. As the ripples spread like ripple of water triggered by a drop of water, there seemed to be an ominous quite that was devoid of mercy.

The cockroaches that were touched by the blue light did not offer even the slightest resistance, merely disappearing without even ash remaining.

At the sight of this divine flame, the boss cockroach ran like a scared rabbit, a scream was caught in the light of the spreading blue that ballooned away from Yue before the boss cockroach unceremoniously disappeared without another sound.

Without the boss cockroach, the small and medium cockroaches that were being fought by Shia and Kouki’s group became confused at the loss of leadership, and became trivial nuisances. The blue light continued to spread, it swallowed the cockroaches around Shia as well.

As the flame spread out, Kouki and the others watched it approach with anxious looks.

It wasn’t unreasonable for them to feel rushed. They were able to see the destruction in front of them.

The reason was clear. Kouki, Shia, and the others weren’t sure whether the flame that destroyed the cockroaches so completely would hurt them as well. However, it was not simply Shia and the rest that remained unharmed. The large tree trunk and branches remained intact as well.

They gave Hajime and Yue surprised looks when they realized that the flame that spread across the underground space and completely devastated the cockroaches only affected those cockroaches.

–Divine Flame

A flame type superlative magic which shot “blue flames” rapidly 10 times into the space around and compressed it with gravity magic. Yue further specified the magic with “selection” using spirit magic, so that it avoided those whom contained souls. (Translation Note: Cockroaches don’t go to heaven)

Anyone Yue permits survives while it seeks out those she sets as an enemy.

That is, indeed, suitable to be called art. It wouldn’t be unreasonable to say that a god named Yue passed judgement from heaven.

“Unexpected magic… Indeed expected from Yue.”

“Nn… Praise me more, please?”

As the light of the flames started to go out, the voices of the two of them echoed in the underground space.

Indeed Yue showed some signs of exhaustion, so Hajime gave Yue a big hug in reward for her hard work. Yue wrapped her arms around Hajime’s neck and allowed her entire body to relax against him. And just like that, she kissed his neck, followed by the sound of sucking as she bit and lapped up his blood.

“When saying it like that, I wonder who won this match.”

While Yue stuck to the scruff of Hajime’s neck and drank his blood, he held her with one arm, while gently stroking her hair with the other. And so he was reminded of and questioned the outcome of the game the pair of them had started.

“…. Nn, haa… Nn. My win. Hajime will not disagree.”

Yue separates from Hajime with an ecstatic expression, her eyes were as bewitching as always as she licked her lips.

“Yue, I must ask, does it really matter how won or lost, does it mean so much?”

“... Hehe. Well, then, I guess we can put that aside for now.”

As the pair of them spoke casually, discussing things ‘just in case’, there came another loud voice.

“Are you guys going to flirt forever, or can you rejoin the rest of us!”

“Yes! Yue is cheating! Hajime-kun and I are... anyway, please return!”

It was Shia and Kaori. They were beckoning us to return right alongside Kouki and the rest. Tio merely shrugged her shoulders. They were trying to take their feelings into account and had been waiting. Kouki and the others looked a bit uncomfortable, Suzu and Shizuku had their eyes lowered and blushes on their cheeks. It looked like they had been watching Yue and Hajime from a distance.

From their reactions, it looked like their feelings had returned to normal as well. Hajime didn’t know if they had returned under their own power or if it was the result of the boss cockroach dying.

The pair stared at each other and gave another light kiss before returned to a place beside Shia.

“You kissed so casually at the end...”

“I’m envious... but... but... It’s good to see you’re safe. Although I felt like... “not only you!” or “me too!” but I don’t want to sound selfish...”

“Indeed, as expected of Yue and Hajime. Battling in a world alone, tossing him around like a toy, it wasn’t as pitiful as expected.”
(Translation Note: I think this is Tio claiming she wishes she was the boss cockroach getting kicked around by Hajime, lol).

There were three people which came away with three different responses, but it was Shia’s words that had the biggest impact. Hajime gives her a hug with one hand without releasing Yue. She doesn’t seem to mind at all. However, Kouki and company wore mixed expressions over his nerve.

"... Did you recover your feelings on your own?"

"You could say I return on the way, yes..."

"Would, um. May I ask that you had returned to normal without help?"

Kaori looks doubtful about Yue's question to Shia. Tio adds the explanation while forcing a smile.

"You may say that I also returned without help. I assume that the trigger was jealousy over the war declaration between master and Yue? This mistress was envious of their fervent love. However, soon they did not even bother with the cockroaches, just each other.... Was that the same for Shia and Kaori as well?"

"Yes, it was..."

"Yup..."

So it was that sort of thing. Hajime glanced over to Kouki's group to see how they were doing.

"....." X3

"Well, -how is it? The last cockroach to die was back to being unpleasant."

Shizuku appeared to be the only one to recover on her own. It was expected of Shizuku given her mental strength. Kouki and the others must have received even more damage as they had to watch their lovable cockroaches die all the way to the very end.

A bit later, Shia was asking Yue about the magic from a short while ago. Suddenly, a portion of the large tree near the ceiling started shining. While helping Kouki's party recover from their damages, Hajime observed a Mekimeki sound, followed by a giant branch which began to grow anew.

The branch created a new aisle as its length increase little by little. Hajime and the others remained in the four point aisle from the start of the cockroach attack until the fifth branch joined up to their intersection. The branch aisle had come from the ceiling, so it took the form of a stairway which led them up the branch to the heavens.

After a brief look at each other, Hajime and the rest hurried to follow the newly formed path.

However, Yue was holding Hajime tightly. Yue wouldn't let go and Hajime didn't try to separate. That was fine, afterall. However, Kaori also pulled from the left while a sullen Shia pulled from the right. Meanwhile, Tio clung from the back. It goes without saying that Kouki and company watched this with indescribable expressions.

When they finished climbing the fifth branch aisle, they entered another cave-like room. Hajime remained on his guard and before long a magic circle glowed and they found themselves teleported once again.

After the light settled, they could see that they were in a garden that spread out right in front of them.

The sky felt alarmingly close.

The air seemed clean. The ground spread out to roughly the size of high school gymnasium. There were trees which were relatively small and a small chalky building which had various waterways spreading out from it.

Twines surrounded the largest tree, which sat in a small island circled by canals, a central stone lithograph sitting at its base.

Tio walked into the garden, peeping over the edge.

"What do you think, master? It looks to be the top of the tree here."

Others glance towards the bottom from the end of the garden after Tio's word too. It's a vast sea of clouds and an unmistakable thick fog spread out under their eyes.

"Hey, this is strange. When we flew over the sea of trees, we had crossed the dense woodland and saw no tree this big. No tree could crest the thick fog, this height must be up over 200 meters at least. It's impossible to be seeing from a tree this high." (Translation Note: To put that in perspective, the largest skyscrapers are around 450 meters, so they're high, but not that high. On the other hand, the world's tallest tree is only ~116 meters)

Hajime noticed the humor of his remark after saying it. After all, the upper part sticking out from the thick fog would only be natural, especially considering the size of the tree as seen from the ground expanding across the dense woodland.

Nevertheless, you would think that the large trees size would have been verifiable before now.

"... I see. It is concealing magic which is doing this?"

"... It is, like some kind of shadow system form of spirit magic... or is it just shifting space?"

Yue considered the magic based on Hajime's inference. If it's shadow magic, there should be some form of recognition obstruction, but the scaling is strange. If this were like spirit magic, they would be conscious of the alterations being made with the magic of the soul. However, they weren't aware of any discomfort, which would be impossible considering Yue's skill.

Hajime and his group wore impressed looks. Although they had experienced a number of trials and had managed to keep the nastiness to a minimum, there was still the liberator. Although ordinarily, the liberators did not seem ill-natured.

"Is this the goal here?" Hajime muttered.

This caused Kouki and the others to where startled expressions. "Here.... Finally..."

Hajime ignored them and walked directly to the lithograph.

The group crossed a pretty arch and entered a yen-like small island circled by a channel. The lithograph began to glow as they approached, the bright green magic flowing into the channel. So it functioned like a magic circle? Phosphorescence like fireflies raised flickeringly.

The sense to probe a memory and then inscribe knowledge by force. Hajime and the others were familiar with this. A raised voice groaned as some one else behind him was "struck" with shock and a sense of discomfort.

As the knowledge flowed into Hajime, the tree began to entangle around the lithograph and swell.

Hajime and the others assume a posture of struggle. The shape of the tree began to change, tearing away branches as it formed. Phosphorescence rose away from Hajime, forming into the image of a person's face in the middle of the trunk. It takes on a female appearance from the shoulders up.

The person's form is complete; the woman's eyes open. Then, the mouth opens gently.

"First of all, I'd like to say congratulations. You've defeated several of the great labyrinths. I am Luluo Haltina, and I prepared the Haltina (Sea of Trees) Great Labyrinth. I apologize for the very difficult trials I prepared with the maximum regard."

She seemed to have used the tree as a medium for her recording. This was the form instead of Oscar's "pictures". Luluo felt dignified like she might be connected to some form of royalty. Although some of that feeling may come from the tree stem itself, which split around her like hair, and contained a certain kind of beauty.

"However, it is also necessary. If you came through the dungeons of the other liberators, then you know about our relationship with the gods, the past tragedy, and what's happening right now. Therefore, I wanted you the learn something about the unwavering bond that can't be swayed, a heart that can't be shaken. I think you who arrived here surely understand something about the strength of the heart as well as its weaknesses. I'm wishing sincerely that that is of assistance to you in the future."

Shia listened to Luluo Haltina's talk with a meek face. But Hajime was already impatient. He didn't need pretentious excuses. For once, however, he quietly read the air.

"I do not know for what purpose you sought my magic, -"sublimation" magic, you are free to use it as you see fit. However, stick to your bonds, and do not drown in power."

Hajime was already looking around restlessly. How is it? Even if he watched it, it wouldn't change anything. He was already considering removing the lithograph to shut her off and move on already.

"My god level magic "sublimation" is the power to make everything evolve. That is the knowledge that is given. But, true value of this magic is found elsewhere."

Hajime's eyes widened for a moment. The hand that was hovering over Donner was returned to his side, and his eyes rested on Luluo. The real value of sublimation magic wasn't given in the knowledge. Tell me that first! Hajime pointed a blaming look.

"Sublimation magic makes the "power" of everything be sublimated, literally. The other god-level magics are no exception for that.... Gravity magic, spirit magic, alteration, space magic... these mighty forces are the foundation of the management. All of which lead to further evolution... even when combined with each other. This magic would be better called "Magic concepts".

Someone made a gulping sound, resonating the desire for such a magic.

Hajime also had his eyes opened wide in surprise. At one time, in Miledi's Raisen's labyrinth, she suggested that if he obtained all the god's level magic, he might be able to find something that would grant his desires. He needed to obtain god generation magic. It probably meant this.

"Concept magic – is the meaning which is just as it sounds. The magical manifestation of how magic acts in this world. Even if you obtain the god-level magic, it cannot be used so easily, because concept magic is invented by utmost will, not theory."

So that was the reason it couldn't be copied by magical circle.

After hearing the explanation, Hajime frowned. "Utmost will"... if it's an explanation done so lightly.

"We seven liberators worked over the course of decades and only managed three magical concepts. However, that was enough for us... but

which one will you need?"

Just as Luluo said so, the lithographic center slides and something like a pocket watch comes out from the inside. Hajime takes it into his hand. One needle of the same length was fixed on a plate in the center of the semitransparent lid. On the backside was a pattern painted in the form Luluo Haltina used. Apparently, it also serves as a proof of capture. Luluo resumed her explanation.

"For the name, it's called the "compass of desire". The concept that, when activated, shows the place I desired." (Translation Note: Pirate's of the Caribbean anyone? Drink up, my me hearties you ho!)

Hajime heard the explanation and his heart skipped a beat.

"The place I desired is shown." That means...

"It will lead you to the location to want to go. Anything, anywhere, be it hidden or – even in another world."

"....."

The "different world" Luluo is talking about will be the world by which the Mad Gods reside. The liberators must have used concept magic out of utmost will. To beat the gods, of course.

Therefore, this compass was produced to find the place where god was. Hajime was certain Oscar helped make this compass using the concept magic as well as his generation magic.

But – it should also be possible to use this compass to show them how to return to Japan.

A means to return home was found... delight welled in Hajime's chest like he might burst. Yue clenched his hand and gave him a firm squeeze, looking up at him gently.

"To get all the god's magic, if that is your goal, you'll be able to travel anywhere. I wish you to move forward with free will and find happiness in your life. Good luck for your future."

Luluo had come to the end of her words after giving her speech, all that

was left was the tree with the entangled lithograph.

They remained immersed in the afterglow in silence as if chewing on the events that just happened to their satisfaction. Only the sound of the rustling of leaves as the wind blew gently affected their vicinity.

It was Hajime that broke the stillness, asking Yue with a monotonous tone of controlled emotion. “Yue, just to hear it, using the magic of sublimation, combined with spatial magic. Can we cross to another world?”

Startled movements spread across Kouki’s group behind him.

Yue understood the weight of those words and the exploration of that potential. And with the strongest magic user with the knowledge of the god’s inscribed in her mind, she searched for a solution.

As result, she obtained the answer…

“…. I’m sorry.”

“Really…”

Just that. If the world can be exceeded simply by mixing spatial magic with sublimation, then certainly the liberators wouldn’t have had so much trouble, too.

Luluo has said that there were three concept magics that had been produced. The first concept was given to the “compass of desire”. It would stand to reason that the other concepts would be the concept to go to another world and the concept to overthrow the gods.

In other words, when not attaining to concept magic, the idea of leaving the world is difficult.

Yue was hanging her head dejectedly at being unable to meet Hajime’s expectations. Hajime gave her a kind smile and combed his fingers quietly through her beautiful gold hair. Yue seemed ticklish, looking upward at Hajime and shrugging her shoulders as he ran his fingers over her skin.

“It’s no problem. I was being greedy. It was just a thought. We just need

more god-level magic. We just need to get the right one, and you'll definitely be able to figure it out, so don't have such a face."

The heart that was impatient at the thought they might be able to return had already recovered its poise, and Hajime shrugs his shoulders with the expressions he had to spare. In answer to whether Yue was relieved at his recovery, like usual she snuggled close to him.

"Cough, Cough. Well... is Yue and Hajime back to normal? I think a shortcut formed for us to return to entrance. So less lovey dovey for now!"

Shia, while looking at Yue and Hajime, interrupted their pink space while saying "Yes, as always", certainly in one corner of the garden the magic circle appeared. As Shia suggested that would be the shortcut to descend back to the ground level.

After checking the magic circle, Hajime strokes Shia's bunny ears to correct some of her sulkiness. Then Kouki starts to speak up.

"Oh... hey, Nagumo. A short while ago when... you received the concept magic..."

"Yeah... we should be able to return now. At least, this compass will tell me where to head next."

"Really..."

Kouki wore an expression as if hope was lost. Ryuutaro, Shizuku, and Suzu also wore feelings that looked ready to explode, like they might start crying at any second. They were hesitating over the lack of getting the god-level magic, but only because Hajime was there for the moment. It seemed like they would have to depend on Hajime.

"The, a, as for that, Nagumo. When returning..."

Suzu tries to ask Hajime about something.

Even if she didn't say it, it was possible to guess. They remembered Hajime's indifference to his classmates. That they might only be able to return if Hajime does it for them... Reserve goes out when perfect salvation depends on the benevolence of another being straight through.

Suzu, as the typical mood manufacturer, was either in a good place or a bad place as she tried to talk and stir around the subject of returning home. The thought was they could return naturally too, but... that was groundless, and... Well, Hajime didn't hate this kind of thing.

"Be relieved. There won't be any capacity restrictions or demerits. I'll return everyone if I can."

"It is, taken along or... eehehe. Thank you, Nagumo-san."

"For the fact that you had so little confidence. You didn't really do anything, did you?"

"Ugh!"

Kouki, Ryuutaro, and Suzu hang their heads to their chests.

With just sublimation magic, the ability of every magic can be raised a bit. Of course, when you already had god-level magic, the necessity to sublimate it would look more like a limit breakthrough without the side effects, so there would also be some restrictions. Like Rebirth without the side effects or something like that.

Still, they seemed unconfident. It should be said that they couldn't get sublimation magic. But also that it could be expected. It was that the tests were flawed and exploitable that they made it to the end in the first place.

But as such, Kouki and the others hanged their heads. Still, one person tried to follow awkwardly with the circumstances.

"Yaegashi... you seem to be able to use the new magic?" Hajime asked.

"!... Oh, I think that, I can use it, yes."

"Ho! Is that true?"

"That was really it? You've learned it?"

"Indeed, Shizu, Shizu! Suzu's Bride!"

This also could be expected. Shizuku had been through the pleasure hell, a dream of the ideal world, and having her feelings reversed all

without help. Even if her battle ability wasn't enough, the god-level magic was worth getting just from the mental power she had to fight through.

It was heartwarming, but it seemed like Suzu was the only one who appreciated that fact purely. Ryuutaro wore a mortified expression while Kouki wore ominous shadows in his expressions while he praised with a smiling face.

Shizuku watched Kouki with an anxious look at that.

"Anyway, back to Fair Bergen again. Slowly. Hordes of cockroaches was light trauma. Serious mental damage. Yue needs to heal with spirit."

"Kufufufu. I'll fix you right up."

"I, I too! I'll put my head on your lap, too! Yue's already done enough! I'm on top of this!"

"It's because everything is done! Because everything is done! I say it twice because it's important!"

"The tired master should step on mistress! It'll be good. I make the mistress chair replacement so you can relax. Do you have a firm foothold separately? You may stamp as much as you like?"

As Hajime walked to the magic circle while cuddling with Yue, Shia and the rest crowd around him from left, right, and behind.

Hajime wrapped a hand around Shia's arm while giving a little laugh. Shia gives a start, but seems happy and grasps back. Kaori and Tio think Shia is given priority somehow and turn to look at her with envious eyes.

Shizuku follows behind watching the view with a bright expression while considering the possibility of going home.

One boy wore a smile and chose to understand it that way at least, and thus the capture of one of the seven great labyrinths, the Sea of Trees, was complete.

Chapter 133: Shizuku's Confusion

The depths of the forest of Fair Bergen felt particularly peaceful and calming that morning.

The twitter of a nearby bird stirred in the air like a ripple across the water's surface. It seemed to be a gentle music, floating along with the tone of rustling leaves.

However, in a particularly unremarkable part of Fair Bergen out of public eye, there sounded a different kind of noise.

Hugh! Hugh! Hugh!

"Up! Hah! Oh! "

It was sharp sound of air splitting combined with short breaths. With each sound, a black line cut through the air, splitting the morning fog. The black sword moved naturally through the air like flowing water.

The sword wielder's movements were extremely refined, and when combined with her flowing black hair, resembled a dance dedicated to the gods.

The black sword and black hair moved near the path of a falling leaf, arcing in a circular pattern. The leaf fell within the sword's path and was immediately dispersed, beads of sweat scattering into the mist.

For how many hours did she dance with the earth? The ground was carved with her footprints, and there were an immeasurable number of destroyed leaves at her feet.

However, her blurred form moved tirelessly, fighting against her own exhaustion. Her form was innocent, yet beautiful to behold, each strike with the sword performed in earnest.

"—hah."

Shizuku's eternal blade dance suddenly met disorder. Her sword missed the leaf by a quarter of an inch. The centrifugal force of her spin caused her to lose her balance.

Shizuku barely managed to avoid tumbling. With a bitter face, she put the black sword to her side.

“Hah, hah, well...”

Shizuku shook her head in irritation. Her trademark raven-black ponytail whipped left to right, echoing her sentiment.

“Clear your mind, clear as water.”

Taking a deep breath, she remembered to put her mind at peace and to calm her heart. It was an exercise she had learned in Japan while she practiced fencing. Shizuku’s troubled heart regained its tranquility quickly.

However, the figure of a boy emerged from that calmness...

“Nuaaa!!!”

While gallantly shouting in an unladylike manner, she swung her black sword as if to beat away at the image in her mind.

“Different, different! That is why! It’s different!”

The waters of her mind were turbulent, not a single sense of calm anywhere. Like a typhoon ravaging the sea, Shizuku’s mind rampaged.

“This is all different, and I don’t know the meaning. I’m calm, I’m cool.”

By all odds, she was far from calm. Her heart seemed to scream at her incoherently.

In fact, she had spent the entire day trying to calm herself, but her sword wouldn’t listen, the state of her mind shown in its choppy movements and her negligent footwork.

She was trying to shake off the disturbance in her heart with discipline and training.

Why, it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say Shizuku spent all night focusing on that.

Yesterday, Hajime and the rest had returned from the Haltina Great Labyrinth and chose to rest immediately. Shizuku got a meal and a bath

before immediately going to bed, of course. However, she couldn't sleep for some reason, her mind turbid. Though it was midnight, she left her bed, the black sword in hand.

And it was that boy who kept rising to the surface of her mind, causing her to suffer the mental anguish when idle.

"Sie! Sie! See!!!"

Her shout got rougher after each strike.

It was the unpleasant events of the large labyrinth that she couldn't avoid thinking about.

It had started after they were brought into that world of dreams. When Shizuku remembered the sweet world, it caused her to blush, but it was also painful... Her ideal world... was something she could never tell anyone.

She tried to reject the inner maiden within her heart.

"Uryaaa!!!"

This caused her to think about the final trial of the great labyrinth. The unexpected content of her reversed feelings. It wasn't the fact that she had felt love for the black creatures. No, it was her extreme dislike for a certain boy... she didn't have the urge to kill him, but her thoughts were certainly hateful.

That is...

"It's different. Friendship. It's friendship Bonzai!"

She lost her composure with the sword. It seemed to stem from the collapse of her character. The black sword swung in vain, the wind switching around crudely. Shizuku grimaced in displeasure as the shadow of that boy floated in her vision like a phantom, a hateful smile on his face. If one of her classmates saw this, they'd be shocked.

Shizuku continued to swing the sword recklessly, trying to bring back the peace and remove her confusion. To shake off and deny it. She wanted to convince herself that it was all a misunderstanding.

With fatigue setting in, Shizuku's feelings started to regain their original stillness. As to the cause of her turmoil, that was, of course, the nature of the Great Labyrinth, an eccentric environment that created a temporary loss of propriety. Her heart finally settled down, even if she thought about him. Back to normal.

"Fuaaa!"

She slowly expelled a breath. She closed her eyes and remained in the darkness, sweat dripping down her pale skin, an eloquent sight to the morning. With her body wet, hair sticking to her cheeks, hot breath coming from her lips, it can only be described as slightly sexy.

As Shizuku indulged in the lingering calmness, a voice spoke up.

"As I'd expect from Shizuku."

"Ahh!?"

Shizuku's heart jumped through her throat at the sound of a familiar voice. The tone disturbed her peace. The thought "How is this expected?" came without anyone to tsukkomi. Shizuku glanced back at the voice with these turbulent thoughts in her mind.

The expected person, Hajime, stood there. She had not felt any sign of his approach from her training.

"Nagumo-kun. Don't scare me like that, it is poor tastes to stand behind me."

Shizuku gave a smile while her heart pounded and throbbed uncomfortably.

Confronting Hajime while he took her chastising...

"... Have... Pufu!"

"!!"

Her chastising was repeated but only received laughter. He could only react to her colorful criticism with humor. However, because her cheeks were dyed slightly, her statement had very little weight.

That awareness is like a splinter hurled at her consciousness.

“And you… you…”

Hajime, still slightly laughing at her remark, gives an apology and tossed her a towel from his treasure warehouse. Realizing that she was covered in sweat, she began to wipe herself with a surge of panic and a strange sense of embarrassment.

“I wasn’t looking to disturb you. I just woke up early. I was looking for a suitable place to train and came across Yaegashi. I wanted to see how you’re doing. Are you doing well?”

“I am… I just couldn’t get any sleep.”

“Well, you did conquer your first large labyrinth. I suppose you’re still excited?”

“Oh, well…”

It was certainly exciting in a different way, and there was an increase in strength. However, Shizuku couldn’t say it and averted her eyes.

The suspicious act caused Hajime to narrow his eyes and tilt his head with a puzzled look.

Shizuku ended up losing more of her composure.

She looked restless, uncomfortable, fidgety…

“… Yaegashi, have you been feeling any strangeness, any aftereffects?”

“Oh? You could say I’m fine. Yes, completely healthy! Rather, in the best condition.”

“If you say so… but you look very tired, and you’re acting suspiciously.”

“Suspicious behavior? Coming from you? I am ordinary! You’re the one who is standing behind people thoughtlessly!”

“You’re usually cool as ice (TN: he refers to her as a hitman)… always calm…”

Though Shizuku was obviously not normal, she insisted she was, so Hajime decided to stop worrying about it. He put on that kind of look

before approaching Shizuku.

Shizuku suddenly panicked at Hajime's sudden approach. She pushed both hands out in front to put up a barrier between the two of them.

"What? Why are you coming towards me? Please wait a moment. Sweaty! Territory Violation! Calm down! Do you want the towel? But it's all... Not good. I'll return it once it's washed! So please stop!"

"... Something is definitely wrong... I only want to see your black sword."

As Hajime approached her, the attitude Shizuku presented while stepping backward was that as if she was being approached by a pervert.

"Oh? My Black sword? Something like that..."

"I can reinforce it. It's something I figured out thanks to the sublimation magic. If you'd rather I didn't, that's fine..."

"You can... If you do, I'm thankful."

Shizuku timidly showed him the edge of her black sword. It seemed he didn't intend to get any closer.

Shizuku was acting more and more suspicious to Hajime, but he supposed she didn't want to get close to someone after sweating so much, so he gave a shrug.

Hajime grabbed the black sword and stamped his foot. Instantly, the ground rose into the form of a chair and table. He sat down in the chair and pulled various ores out of the treasure warehouse while displaying the black sword in front of him. (Translation Note: The summary says he pulled them from his storage, but the MTL made it seem like he transmogrified it from the ground, that was his thing for quite a while, after all.)

While watching this, Shizuku took the chair opposite of Hajime's while wearing a gloomy and restless expression.

"....."

"....."

There was no conversation. As Hajime fiddled with the ore, only the sounds of small birds chirping and the whispers of leaves could be heard, and the morning peace and calm returned.

However, Shizuku did not feel particularly uncomfortable. Although there was some tension between her and Hajime initially, the silence did well to help her regain her peace of mind.

Hajime doesn't spare Shizuku a single glance, deep in concentration. Hajime's pupils take on a serious expression, brightened by red magic. As Hajime's hands moved, crimson magical light altered the composition of the minerals themselves.

Shizuku's thoughts were like "as expected, it's beautiful" as she watched Hajime's face while he worked. She started to doze off, her head falling to her shoulder and elbows. After staying up all night, drowsiness was the consequence.

In the middle of the work, Hajime took her hand and extracted a drop of blood. The act startled Shizuku and almost caused her to fall from her chair.

As the moments passed on, Shizuku began to fall into a sense of strange comfort, her eyes once again growing heavy. Then Hajime's voice spoke up.

"Look, it's done, Yaegashi."

"...."

"Yaegashi?"

"...."

"You're asleep?"

Her arm functioned as a pillow for her head. Hajime squinted at her face, observing that her eyes were closed. He looked in amazement at the defenseless expression she wore as she slept.

Normally, one would wake them up gently, or perhaps put a jacket over them. Hajime instead shoved magic power into the sword and presses it

against Shizuku, activating one of its functions.

“Baribaribaribaribaribari.” (electric shock)

“Abababababababa.” (sound of someone being electrocuted)

Sparks gushed out the blade. Shizuku made a scream, stiffening up and springing to her feet in an instant. Hajime had activated the fireman’s standard thunder, which was certainly one way to wake you up.

As soon as the black sword was pushed away, her head thumped face first into the table, white smoke rising from her body as she rubbed her jaw with one hand.

The black sword seemed to have worked satisfactorily.

“Why’d you do that so suddenly?”

Naturally, the recovering Shizuku roared in anger. She hit the table with her hand and gave Hajime a scowl.

“I figured I could wake you up and test the weapon’s efficiency at the same time.”

“You say that without a single reservation, this guy...”

As Shizuku tried to throw our words of protest, she realized that she had tossed the sword away while being shocked. She raced over to recover it.

“Before obtaining the sublimation magic, the best I could do was add one or two abilities to ore. However, by tying the magic with the generation magic, I was able to create two or more effects.”

“And you’re ignoring my anger to explain... Alright... It’s fine now.”

Since Hajime began explaining the reinforcement of the black sword as if nothing happened, Shizuku decided to let it go with a grand sigh. She watched him with scornful eyes, trying to convince herself to do so.

“Therefore, I added some new magic to the black sword. One is gravity magic. The weight of the sword can be changed. You can pull and repel against the blade and even cut gravity itself for an instant.”

“That... is amazing.”

The scorn in Shizuku’s eyes dissipated during Hajime’s explanation, instead of opening wide as she glanced over the black sword. However, it might have been too early to be surprised. As Hajime’s explanation continues, her face starts to tighten over the full abilities of the sword.

First, it is possible to rupture space itself using spatial magic.

The black sword can repair itself automatically with reproduction magic. Moreover, it may aid in the recovery of the user to boot.

It can also damage the spirit by penetrating the body with spirit magic.

As well, fireman’s standard thunder and wind nail’s performances were improved, plus the new ability shock conversion.

“.....”

Furthermore, the authentication method and status of the plate was reworked so that a long intonation is no longer necessary for a high effect. The sword itself has a “movement state” allowing the spells to be used chantlessly. Because Yaegashi is a speed fighter, she wouldn’t able to spend long periods intoning a skill.

Hajime finished his explanation. Shizuku watches the black sword in her hand, cold sweat running down her face. The original cheat sword she possessed has now become flat out bugged, no matter how you look at it. If its performance was known, wars would be fought to acquire this weapon. It is currently the strongest sword in this world.

“Is it alright... having such a thing...”

“Oh, it’s just in case.”

“Just in case?”

Shizuku tilted her neck to the side with a puzzled look as Hajime looked up at the sky and gave a small nod.

Hajime had a sharp look, like from the eyes of a keen wolf. Shizuku’s heart started to beat rapidly. However, she waited for Hajime’s explanation while ignoring the heat rising in her cheeks.

“It’s pretty understandable. Once we capture the last labyrinth that means we should be able to return to Japan. However, there will be obstacles. The idea that it’ll go that smoothly is just optimism.”

“Obstacles? You mean like the mad gods?”

“Yes. It doesn’t seem like the god’s will let an irregularity like me go. I’ll need some meat for the time when the God’s Apostles like Nointo start to appear in large quantities... though you’ve also considered the age of gods magic as a war potential.”

“Didn’t you say something early about needing a meat wall? Hey? You said that didn’t you?”

Hajime carelessly leaked a bit of his real intention, and Shizuku tried to address it with a floating vein throbbing. However, Hajime kept on talking, disregarding it.

“My artifact making ability as transcended into a new evolution thanks to the sublimation magic. Even if it doesn’t improve any of the other age of god’s magic, a considerable improvement in combat potential is possible. I can improve all of your equipment. Not only Yaegashi but the rest of the party too. While we go to the ice and snow labyrinth, it’s possible another apostle of god may attack. It must be repulsed by any means. Of course, you’ll also be able to challenge the other labyrinths with those strengthened arms.”

“I understand what you mean...”

Having said what he wanted to say, Hajime stood up. Shizuku wore a troubled expression and hesitated.

“... After all, Nagumo-kun’s group will go without us?”

“Hmm? Do you want to come with?”

“.....”

Shizuku didn’t answer. Originally, this was a big favor they asked and Hajime kept to his side of the bargain. He was to help them capture one large labyrinth.

The struggle through the large labyrinth, it seemed to permeate through their flesh and bones. She couldn't deny the ability shortage that she possessed. In a word, even if she followed, she'd be a burden for Hajime and the others.

Furthermore, once capturing the ice and snow labyrinth, returning might become available. So Hajime had no reason to bring the other classmates along.

That's why Shizuku didn't answer, instead of shaking her head. Hajime opened his mouth at Shizuku's response, then shrugged.

"Well... if it's only Yaegashi, I wouldn't mind bringing you..." (TN: Of course, wouldn't want to leave some of your harem behind.)

"Eh?"

Shizuki's eyes widen in surprise at the unexpected words that leaked from Hajime.

A beat later, Shizuku turned her head, her cheeks blushed red like a furnace as she hurried to conceal it. While desperately trying to calm down her wild heart, she attempted to ask Hajime's real intention.

"As for that, what..."

"Well, it's strategy. Your spiritual strength won't be a problem at all. The gaps in skill can be filled with an artifact."

"Oh, yes. Is that true?"

Her expectations were easily betrayed. Shizuku still thought "I did not expect it!"

Shizuku looked back, pulling the heat from her cheeks and quieting her mind while giving Hajime a reproachful look.

However, the words immediately after caused the blush to return once again.

"Yes, that's true. Apart from the other members of my party, Yaegashi is the person I trust in most."

“!!!”

It seemed like Shizuku’s reproachful look was a result of her thinking Hajime was trying to flatter her, but Hajime misunderstood. It was a recantation because of that. But the correction tugged at Shizuku, and she began to blush again.

Hajime wore a wry smile, ignoring Shizuku’s reaction while concentrating on his original purpose.

“Although, well, even if only Yaegashi follows, that could be trouble.”

“Eh... why is that?”

“Well, what will others in the class say? Amanogawa will definitely be out of control without you. He’d run around recklessly or just go missing going “Yaegashi is in trouble!” Embarrassing people are troublesome.”

“You’re being too frank...”

Shizuku was getting tired of being thrown around by Hajime’s behavior. Hajime reached into the treasure storage and pulled out a several chakrams.

“Do the chakram metastasize internally? What are you doing, taking them out?”

“It’s training. Just like you were doing before I came. If you’re tired, you should head back. You should be able to get some sleep now.”

As Hajime said it, Shizuku remembered how tired she really was now.

However, it didn’t seem easy to leave this place either. Looking at the surroundings... and Hajime, who had created a column of thirty or more Chakram around his body. Noticing it caused Shizuku’s mouth to drop.

“... May I watch... a little?”

“I don’t mind, but are you sure you don’t need sleep?”

“It’s alright, I’ll return when I get tired enough.”

Hajime shrugged his shoulder, acknowledging Shizuku’s words. Shutting his eyes, he pulled out Donner. Shizuku rested her elbows on the

table, her cheeks in her hands, watching Hajime while supporting her head.

The next moment:

Tantantantantantantantan.

Hajime pulled the trigger on Donner, aiming at the chakram flying around at high speeds fast enough to be difficult to see. The bullets were non-fatal rubber-coated metal, causing the gun to produce a sound different than the usually explosive sound effects.

The fired bullets enter straight, right, and left in their respective chakrum circles, dashing from another chakram before returning to Hakime. The bullet exchanged so as not to put out from the column made from the chakrams metastasizing into more chakrams. His finger continued to pull the triggers as he peeled off and dashed around the circle of charkram aiming at yet another chakram.

It was repeated, minimum movement and eagle-eyed shots emerging across the dancing leaves in every direction.

The movements might have lacked the elegance of Shizuku a little while before, but there was no military art in the last few hundred years that succeeded by being beautiful. However, it was reasonable. The movement was refined for minimum requirements combined with rational decisions. It was a different sort of elegance compared to Shizuku.

It was creating a storm in which Hajime flew within its center, causing Shizuku to stare instinctively.

A bright red ripple expanded in the air from where Hajime worked, in addition, more chakrams were taken from the warehouse, creating a spheroid surrounding from every direction.

And,

Dopan. Dopan. Dopan. Dopan. Dopan. Dopan.

The sphere flashed with bright red as the chakram moved in.

The fatal bullets accelerated by electromagnets, delimiting from the laser-like red line in the glow. Ten meters in diameter, the chakram circle gradually narrowed the range. When it reaches 3 meters, red flashing light discharged continuously from point blank range.

Hajime shot down each light one at a time. Donner in his right and left hand embodied the moving about offense and defense like a separate living entity. The innumerable chakram basked in bright red light, filling the inside of the sphere. The shots and shining increase, like a bright red moon that floated in the sky.

"... Beautiful."

With an entranced expression, Shizuku muttered the words every time she saw the bright red around Hajime. It seemed like her unconscious real feelings were overflowing.

The shots echoed across the forest, spoiling the peace and calm of the morning. However, Shizuku's eyelids continued to become heavy while watching the red star in the sky, and consciousness quietly slipped away from her.

Chapter 134: Awakening

“Nu....Nu?”

Shizuku’s eyes opened softly while she leaked out a cute noise. Waking up from her nap, her pupils couldn’t seem to focus quite right. A moment, later, she realized that she was looking at the wood grain of a ceiling over her head. In her half-wakeful state, she also recognized a soft feeling on the back of her head.

As she wore such a defenseless face, a familiar voice came from her side.

“Shizuku-chan, are you waking up? It’s already noon time.”

“Uh?....Kaori...?”

Shizuku unintentionally turned towards the source of the voice. It was indeed her best friend next to her. Kaori was watching Shizuku with a gentle smile, sitting in a chair next to the outdoor window.

She rubbed her eyes and sat up, shaking off sleep like she was rising to the surface from a deep pool of water. She started to recall where she was before she lost consciousness and tilted her head to the side.

“Oh? I was outside in the woods... I mean... how did I get here, this is Kaori’s room?”

This was one of the private rooms prepared for Hajime’s group in Fair Bergen. Although she didn’t know Kaori’s room on sight, since Kaori was here, she assumed it was.

Remembering the event this morning, Kaori wore a bitter smile with just a hint of pain in her heart while examining Shizuku, who wore a puzzled look.

“Yes, it is my room. This morning, Hajime brought Shizuku-chan. You were staying up all night? That’s not good. You just came back from a Great Labyrinth. You should be taking it easy.”

“I understand, I’m sorry. So he brought me here? I don’t remember at

all.”

“Shizuku-chan was very tired.”

Kaori raises an accusing finger at Shizuku as a form of scolding, causing Shizuku to fidget restlessly. Her docility made her look even more cool and adult-like with her long black hair no longer in a ponytail, displaying the gap power between the two of them.

Her unclothed figure in a one piece shirt also contributed to the appearance. No wonder all the girls in the class wanted to call her older sister. Witnessing her figure would cause someone to declare that ‘her destructive power is amazing!’ With a single smile, she could create a blood bath from nosebleeds alone.

Even Kaori was blushing a little. Shizuku looked up at her with a blush of her own and asked Kaori nervously.

“Oh... how did he?”

Shizuku seemed to struggle with the fact that she had succumbed to sleep, her heart rate going up at the thought of Hajime holding her. Was it perhaps a princess carry?

However, reality was cruel, so Kaori’s cheeks were cramped.

“How would you be carried normally?

“...Kaori, normally?”

“Normally, yes, plain. Only a little artistic.”

“Wait, Kaori... what do you mean by artistic?”

Shizuku continued to ask even as Kaori hesitated to say anything disagreeable. Kaori’s eyes seemed to swim for a while, before she forced a smile back onto her face.

“You were sleeping, how do you say?... crucified to a cross... while being drifted through the sky?”

“Eh, crucified?

After hearing it in detail, it seemed the Hajime had used the opportunity

to bring Shizuku back to her room as a form of training, practicing with gravity stones to bring her back without waking her. It could be said that getting the balance right in order to prevent her from being jarred awake would be a burden worthy of being trained.

In addition, she ended up in Kaori's room because Hajime had no clue where hers was.

"Even so... why a cross?"

"It spreads the body out like a sphere, so that mistakes won't jar the body as much, so it's easier to make adjustments, so you sleep."

"Even if you say that... isn't that a sort of unpleasant sleep..."

Shizuku's cheeks twitch convulsively. A vein floats over her forehead, the heat in her chest turning ice cold. Kaori deepens her wry smile.

By the way, the state of Shizuku's crucifixion was witness by a group of passing soldiers. Like the image of Christ on the cross hanging in churches on the earth, it had an effect on people. The number of Shizuku fans increased exponentially due to the mystique of that image, but that was better left unsaid right now.

As Shizuku burned in silent anger, there was a sound from down below. It appeared to be the voice of someone familiar. It was the voice of a woman. Kaori glances out the window.

"It's somewhat noisy? What's going on?"

"...there's an encounter... Shia and Arutena (Translation Note: Yeah, I didn't remember her either. She was an elf saved by Hajime after being enslaved by the Hoelscher Empire). A fight this early in the morning. Something ought to be done."

"What kind of fight?"

"Well, I'm not sure how to explain it, something quarrel-like? It's early, let's go see!"

Without understanding, Kaori sums up and explains the event while urging Shizuku to follow her downstairs.

Apparently, the pair had started fighting regarding something to do with Hajime. After some unheard comment, Shia had exploded and the pair started wrestling. Shia was currently using a cobra twist on Arutena in the middle of a dining area.

Shia seemed to be using professional wrestling techniques on the granddaughter of Alfrerick. She was practically a princess! An estranged girl from the rejected rabbit group was using violence on the daughter of one of the strongest forces in Fair Bergen. In a normal situation, this would be an immediate reason for execution.

However, the rabbit family had changed their luck of recent.

In other words, they were now known as the "head-hunting" rabbit family.

Solving the situation with her skill, Shia spit out vicious words about Arutena daring to keep approaching Hajime, and so she met Arutena crudely and with violence, causing her to crumble. Shia was aware of Arutena's behavior. Though no one would have expected the treasured princess to approach Hajime in the first place, but still...

"Oraoraoraoraora! If you want me to stop, don't make eyes at my Hajime!"

"Ah, ah, ah! This is shameful!"

Apparently, Arutena did not seem too discouraged from continuing to follow Hajime, even at the hands of Shia's wrestling techniques.

Arutena was tossed upside down and put on Shia's shoulder. Professional wrestling technique – kinniku buster! Expanding her splendid legline to the max, Shia lifted Arutena inversely, exposing her groin area. Her undergarments were made bare, defiling her purity and innocence unexpectedly.

By the way, Hajime was still in the dining room. There were also several employees of the dining area and two skiki maids with Arutena. Everyone was flustered except for Hajime.

"Ko... is this okay? That's the princess... being treated this way."

“Is she really the princess? Would she wear such an expression?”

“...Ah... that... Somehow, she seems happy?”

Shizuku asked the question after heading down from the room she had stayed overnight, while Kaori’s expression twitched at the sight in front of her. Kaori made it a response by pointing to Arutena’s face.

Her face was certainly dyed red, but the edges of her eyes seemed to be shining with excitement. Arutena’s expression almost seemed to give out a happy atmosphere.

Though the other party was giving her extreme humiliation... it still seemed like she was following her heart and it was not all together bad.

“You’re going to be obstinate, how about this!”

“Ko...this time, such disgrace.”

Shia had run out of pity as Arutena refused to say she’d stop approaching Hajime. Even before the kinniku buster throw had brought her to the ground, as Arutena fell, Shia kicked out her foot, rolling and bringing her body up. It was the so-called Romero Special.

While rolling, Arituna’s skirt flies up, ruining the grandeur and her once graceful tone. However, her expression still wore a determined look, which invalidated Shia’s persuasive power.

Because Shia’s position, she wasn’t able to see the expression on Arutena’s face. Therefore, she believed that Arutena was sufficiently punished. Everyone in the place was already mind boggled that Arutena wore a pleased expression. “This daughter... she’s already been beaten up but is still pleased?” This put a perplexed expression on everyone’s face.

“I see, something quarrel-like indeed.”

“Yes... you’d like to think even... Tio found a like-minded friend, but this seems a little different.”

Shizuku wore a face of agreement, while Kaori saw something pitiable. In fact, Tio, an oddity in and of herself, seemed to be watching Arutena with affection, like a master watching over the growth of her pupil. Her

look seemed to hold sympathy and joy over finding a compatriot. Hajime and Yue sat down in a seat opposite of hers, while holding looks of disgust.

Tired of this scene, Hajime opened his mouth toward Shia and offered words that damaged Arutena to the very limit.

“Shia, stop wasting your time on nothing.”

“Say, Hajime, I won’t stop. I’m just reducing the number of rivals. The princess decided to refuse. She also seemed a little too conscious of her wants. I took the initiative to strike first!”

Shia shifted into a reverse boston crab, apparently intending to nip this rival in the bud. While putting her into another shameful place, Arutena lets out a painful, but somewhat glad, scream. The appearance of a princess was completely lost. The maids and employees tried to escape reality, their souls hanging out of their mouths, ready to escape.

Hajime turned his eyes on Tio with a flat expression, and then he dipped some bread into his vegetable soup and put it into his mouth before standing up with a reluctant sigh.

While collecting the glances of everyone in the dining room, he moved over to Shia and pulled her arm and Arutena’s foot, separating the two.

The drawn Shia immediately settles into Hajime’s arms. Kaori and Shizuku meet the scene with blank expressions while letting out a stupid “oh!” noise.

Hajime disregarded them. And quietly whispered something into Shia’s rabbit ears, causing her eyes to widen in bewilderment.

“Shia, Is Yue your rival?”

“What?” Yue? That’s not right. Yue is special...that.”

While embracing the puzzled Shia especially strongly, Hajime tried to persuade Shia.

“There already is no rival to you. At least, I don’t intend to talk to other women at the same level I talk to Shia. It’s impossible to compare

Arutena and Shia together. I give you my priority, my special treatment."

"Ha... Hajime..."

To the word "special" that Hajime unexpectedly whispered, Shia dyed red momentarily. It wasn't exactly what Hajime said, but the conviction behind the words that showed Hajime's change in attitude since some nights ago.

In other words, Yue was "special" from everyone else. No one could be in the same line as her, but there isn't only one special person for Hajime, not only Yue can be special.

To be told this, with no special situation, in the middle of a dining room at noon was a complete surprise. While wearing an embarrassed expression, Shia's blush deepened. Everyone else except Yue had stiffened with similar leers as Hajime comforted Shia.

"That, Shia. With regard to Arutena, Do you think that applies to you?"

"What? Eh? I?"

Shia responded with confusion as her back was patted softly.

Arutena had covered her face with both hands, embarrassed by the pink space she suddenly found herself right next to. However, she's peeking out from an opening in her fingers, her eyes trembling restlessly with just a hint of shame.

"After all, I clawing... after all, it's Hajime."

"Chi, it's different! I don't think of Shia badly. But I want to talk to Shia without reserve!!!"

"Oh..."

Shia pulls away from Arutena, then goes back to clinging to Hajime. Such a thing is a professional wrestling skill, obviously. Shia realized she had turned Arutena abnormal unintentionally as she applied a shameful joint technique.

Tio was giving Arutena a look of admiration. Shia noticed, it was indeed a smile of approval.

A new abnormal had been awakened. Shia turned her gaze to Arutena, while floating a disturbed expression.

“Another transformation...”

“This is different! Shia misunderstands! I really just want to get along well with Shia!”

“You do? What? Me?”

Shia was asking nervously as Arutena vented her emotions.

According to Arutena, apparently, this.

Arutena is a princess in Fair Bergen. Since she’s the granddaughter of Alfrerick, a high level person in the community, she is treated as a noble existence between the families. Therefore, she’s always been handled carefully by others.

The result goes without saying. Brought up as a gentle girl with a kind heart, she received a good education and was loved by many, however, she was always given special treatment. She was given first priority, practically worshiped by boys and girls of the same age. There was nothing on equal terms with anyone.

Surrounded by people who’d always treat her gently, she began to feel lonely. She began to feel admiration. She always wanted a close friend, someone who could exchange opinions without restraint.

However, it was the obstinacy and result of the rivalry with Shia, that impacted Arutena the most. It was an impact to her body as well as an impact to her mind. A girl the same age as her treated Arutena mercilessly. It exposed those feelings with ever hit, physical and by word. After the shock, she absent mindedly and unintentionally felt joy.

And, so she thought, someone from the same age group, it might be possible... to become best friends with someone who can put the nature of her family aside. It seemed wonderful.

“Because, I’m ashamed to say, that when I got near Hajime, Shia would pay attention to me.”

“Well, you can’t get attention like you’re a dog…”

“There it is… handled as a dog…me”

“Oh… you react with just that?”

To Arutena, there is blush on her cheeks from a strange gladness for being treated like a dog. Shia wears an “After all…” expression. Arutena sits up, panicking a bit, stretching her hand out to Shia quietly while standing up nervously.

“So, then, if you say so, will you be my friend? Can you answer me?”

“…Somehow, this confession makes me itch… if you just want to be friends, I can’t think of a reason to refuse.”

Shia was disgusted a bit while thinking “it’s still a princess”. She took Arutena’s hand for a handshake, and Arutena wore an amazed expression. Arutena’s look turned to a smile, pleased at the unexpected development. Meanwhile, everyone else wore stiff and uncomfortable expressions.

“?”

When Shia tries to separate her hand, “Huh?”, she inclines her neck. Why won’t Arutena let go of her hand?

“Uh, Arutena-san? My hand…”

“Oh, please drop the honorifics, just call me Arutena! And I’ll call you Shia! Since we are best friends, this is normal!” (Translation note: I’m really bad about catching honorifics, so just assume most people are using –san -sama ect…”

They went from becoming friends to best friends in five seconds. Really? This is the daughter of a large figure in Fair Bergen, after all. Shia began to have a cold sweat, while Arutena blushed at telling Shia as much.

“So, Shia, what technique will you use this time?”

“Eh?”

“It is very shameful, and strange pain even becomes numb… however

Shia's warmth is transmitted. Because I'm Shia's best friend, you can use your various techniques on me. We can play more!"

At that moment, Shia shook off Arutena's hand with a zuzazaza- and retreated back to a wall, cold sweat flowing down her face.

"Na... What best friends? Isn't this just a pervert, you really did change!"

"Such a thing! I only want to spend as much time as I can with Shia before she leaves tomorrow!"

"Then, what comes with "wanting to play"!"

To this dangerous Arutena, Shia's rabbit ears were bristling. Hajime held a smiling expression, and Shia had her mouth gaped.

"Indeed, this is my Shia, who shares the hardship of others."

"The first half of your words are wonderful, but I other half sound unpleasant!"

To a comparatively cruel excuse of experiencing hardship of a locked-on abnormality (Arutena), Shia became watery eyed. Apparently, Hajime doesn't intend to help at all.

Arutena approached Shia who is pressed up against the wall. She's wore a smile that said "Let's continue with what we started a while ago."

Being the opposite of pleased and suppressed by this power, Shia turned and opened a window with a "ban" sound, leaping from the room with a jump and running away like an escaping rabbit. She apparently planned to escape from public until things cooled down.

"Ah? Shia! Where did you go? Wait for me!"

To Shia's actions, Arutena acted like a woman whose lover just deserted her, leaping through the window while executing a physical strength on par with what Shia did. She started running off with a "shitatatata" sound on her feet. Shia turned back and saw Arutena. Giving a shout, "Hiii!?", she bolted off toward the downtown of Fair Bergen.

The two disappeared from sight with surprising swiftness. Everyone was left staring at the scene, Hajime at the head, with feelings that could only

be described as stupefied.

Meanwhile, the form of a girl advanced on Hajime.

“....Hajime... A while ago, what did you mean by what you said to Shia?” Kaori demanded.

Problems just always seemed to outbreak around Hajime.

Chapter 135: Unexpected Future

After the clear affection that Hajime showed Shia, Kaori approached him with a strange sway in her step.

"....Hajime....What was that a little while ago? I wonder?

An impossible shadow floated across her face, with no discernable light source as the cause. Just her eyes darkened. Combined with her chilly look, it had a terrible effect.

"Though it hurts to think about... Did Shia really become someone "special" too? When? Why? What caused this?"

To Kaori's interrogation, Hajime gave a wry smile while scratching his cheek.

"Well, what to say... Although I can't say it's within the same line as Yue... somehow or other, I have started to desire an exclusive possession for Shia. There was Yue's advice too, and so I decided to treat Shia in suitable manner. There was nothing in particular that changed."

"So, it's... romantic feelings for Shia?"

"I'm not sure... It feels different. But I think you can call it love?"

Actually, Hajime could not help by incline his neck as if asking whether these feelings for Shia were in fact romantic.

To Yue, his heart throbbed, and he felt passion that flew in the face of reason, which wasn't the same with Shia. Besides the burning feelings for Yue, he felt a quieter, softer one when it came to Shia. Once putting it into words, he realized it might really be love.

He'd always have feelings that burned like the sun for the always quiet Yue, however, the sweet and innocent Shia was like the moon. It was a very mysterious thought. They were contrasting feelings, but it was clearly more than simple affection. However, since the feelings were subtle, Hajime was at a loss on how to explain.

The entire dining room quieted as Hajime's feelings were expressed.

Shizuku wore a complicated expression, while Yue and Tio wore slightly gentle-looks while they continued to eat sweet cake, and as for Kaori, who had started this cross-examination...

"... Yes, I understand."

She wore a content face, a happy smile forming for some reason.

Even if Yue's position didn't change, this was proof that there was still room in Hajime's heart. That smile was for an important friend who managed to accomplish this. Though finding out had disturbed her and still pressed in unconsciously, she understood that the distance between Hajime could be crossed and smiled as a result.

Of course, she felt envy. There were smoldering feelings, even at this very moment. However, she had fully realized the situation based on the journey so far. If there was time to do such a thing, it was good sense to show yourself in a favorable light.

As Kaori moves through her vivid feelings, she figured half of Hajime's feelings were a result of Shia's natural virtues. Kaori really liked Shia's strength and diligence. She could be happy for a friend.

Somehow, those feelings were picked up, causing Hajime to show an embarrassed look before he reached out and rubbed her cheeks muni-style.

"Fe? Ha... Hajime?"

"It's not really a big deal."

"Eh? What is it?"

Kaori, who became glad for some reason, asked with a smile, not understanding.

However, Hajime didn't answer. While having an expression as if he was giving up silently, he went full muni of Kaori's cheeks. (Translation edit: Doesn't he know you never go full Muni!) Then she turns her eyes to Yue.

Yue had seen the rising affection for Shia in Hajime's eyes, and she wore

a small smile while giving her nod of approval.

Tearing off a piece of bread, she gave Hajime a mysterious smile before dipping it into her soup and then tossing it had Kaori like a brick.

Becha! The bread stuck to Kaori's temple with a sodden sound, clinging to her temple. It quickly transmitted the implication, "It has been decided and you have no involvement." Kaori wore a cramped cheek, pulling off the bread while wearing a dark smile before performing leaping attack at Yue.

"Yu-e!"

"... Stop. Wasted Effort. Just tuck your tail and go home."

Yue avoided Kaori's strike by escaping through the window Shia had jumped through. Looking back over her shoulder, she gave a grin. It held the feeling like "Try catching something outside of your reach."

That "uuuu!" Raising a vexed voice, Kaori chases after. Her silver wings unfolded and she took to the sky. Is their relationship good or bad...? At least Yue seemed to like the interaction with Kaori.

The people left behind stared on in an absent-minded state.

"Hmmm, finally, master has surrendered to Shia, too. In that case, the time in which he falls for mistress and Kaori's charm grows ever closer."

Tio drawed up her unnatural chest, the brutal double hills protruding with a Bachikon! The sound seemed to have an effect on the room. Amorousness overflowed from her body, in particular, the remaining men suddenly become more slouchy.

However, that sex appeal was let loose on Hajime specifically.

"Putting aside Kaori, you have no chance."

"Haa... haaa... so intense... from master... breaking my hopes... piercing adequately, mistresses' weakness... haa... haaa!!"

Her body started shaking from Hajime's word, her thighs fidgeting as she hugged herself. The sensual atmosphere this gave was incomparable to the sex appeal from moments before.

However, the slouching appearance of the men from earlier withered quickly. This was because of the unpleasant look on Tio's face. This killed the mood. (Translation Note: Yes, I find freaky hot girls in the throes of ecstasy to be a real turn off... oh to be in light novel-land!)

Shizuku caught Hajime's strange remark, which seemed to casually suggest that Kaori was in the same category as Shia.

(Then as for me... Hey, what do I have to do with any of this! Kaori seems to be taken good care of. That is enough and, yes, there is nothing else to conclude!)

Standing in a corner of the room, Shizuku's face scrunches up in one comical face after another. Everyone else is focused on Tio. A few gave Hajime brooding or evil expressions. Hajime gave another sigh. Meanwhile, the chases continued on outside.

For noon time in Fair Bergen, it was very noisy compared to the usual tranquility.

"Uu, I encountered such cruel eyes..."

It sounded from a forest corner of Fair Bergen, the complaint shining with the orange of the evening sun.

In a plaza set off a little way in the town, many tables had been set. There was a fountain using spring water in the center. Usually a place for people to rest, none of the residents were out right now, concerned with other matters. Only Hajime and Shia remained there. All the other members were gone, making preparations for travel.

Hajime sat down at one of the tables in the deserted open space, giving Shia a nod in acceptance of her hard work and training. The cause, of course, was the attack from Arutena. Shia had been chased to exhaustion by someone who used animal-like perception rather than physical strength, likely only stopped by her grandfather's intervention.

As Hajime watched her drooping rabbit ears, he couldn't help but burst into laughter. Those ears started to twitch violently.

“Please don’t enjoy it. It was seriously scary!”

“Don’t say that. It’s great to find a friend your age. Isn’t it good you got to play fully?”

“I can’t lie to you, but can you really call that playing, or that kind of relationship friends? I think I understand what Hajime is going through with Tio now, huh? How should I say... being liked doesn’t feel bad, but it’s exhausting?”

The fatigue caused Shia to droop once again.

Hajime felt sympathy for Shia, giving her a node. He understood better than anyone how the goodwill he provided toward Tio was not the extent of a mere transformation. Tio’s desire to not be defeated by Shia and Yue was strong. Therefore, Hajime felt tired, a regrettable reality of his true feelings.

Hajime’s expression softly turned into a smile, and he lifted up a hand quietly. He gave Shia a kind pat, soothing her rabbit ears. As Hajime fawned over one of her ears, Shia trembled offering her other ear.

He had both wonderful rabbit ears wrapped up in his hand, his cheeks blooming. The sweet sound of him stroking her ears with his fingers leaked out, the sweetness transmitting into the neighboring air and wrapping Shia and Hajime up in a sweet space.

Hiding her face in her blueish white hair, she speaks in a whispered voice.

“... Hajime... The... thing is, that, it’s daytime... that...”

The voice was fraught with expectation that can’t hide shamefulness. It was obvious what she wanted to say. She just wanted to be clear.

Hajime rose from his seat with a noise and moved next to Shia, where he sat down. Shia noticed the sign and twitched while turning her face down, her body still shaken. She was pursued by Hajime gently, who turned Shia’s shoulders towards him. He held her powerfully just like that.

Shia's face, held by Hajime, boiled up completely red. Her pupils, full of light, were moistened. The maiden's eyes were too pretty, looking up at Hajime, overflowing with affection.

"…. Shia, it was you who said "The future isn't absolute," certainly it's like that."

"Ah…."

"It was the thing Shia had said to Hajime long ago when she wanted to travel with them. A once-in-a-lifetime confession, words of answer that Shia long since believed were impossible. Absolutely, these words of determination turned to Hajime.

"Shia… now, you haven't confirmed your feelings."

There was still Yue who was "special". Is she really even good enough to hear such a thing? Shia was afraid of confirming.

"I love Shia very much… I do not want to lose her to anybody."

Even though the words were selfish, his desire leaked from them. Shia's eyes increased in heat, she let out a hot breath like a dragon.

"There is not chance I want to let you go, so please decide. Shia is my woman!"

"…. Yes…. Yes… I am Hajime's woman!"

While tears fell down her cheeks and her body lips tightened, she wore a smile. It was a blooming, energetic, full smile. No, a smile that was many times more beautiful and lovelier than anything preceding it. Surely, if other men saw Shia today, their hearts would race and their blood pressure would rise just by this look.

In it, Hajime was no exception. The love within him spiked and he hugged Shia tightly, taking her lips against his own.

"Nu…. mmmm…"

At Hajime's beckon, rejoicing tears fell from Shia. Her body lightened like cotton candy, a sweet sigh leaking from her. Her body burst with heat like the Guryuen Labyrinth as if she'd start melting at any moment.

“…. Ah…. Hajime…”

A silver bridge hung from their parting lips separated with only a breath. The embarrassed Shia lowers her eyes. Her usual cheerfulness is overridden by a terrific loveliness. It was a charm that could hold a man captive in a way that matched even Yue’s mysterious beauty.

Shia’s pink lips opened slightly, her tongue moving with a chirochrio (abundance?). Her pupils give him an upward glance. A look that said… “more”.

Hajime smiled, looking at the lovely pleading Shia. His lips met hers again as his hand touched her cheek.

At that point, an impatient voice suddenly spoke up.

“Fuhya, to start doing that that… those two… and outside!”

“Shh! Suzu, you’re being too loud!”

“Shizuku-chan is being too kind when it comes to Hajime.”

“…. Everyone is being too noisy, you’ll embarrass Shia.”

To those familiar voices, Shia separated her lips with a gasped and turned her gaze to those who were talking.

Shia, becoming aware of the group, lost the mood. “Wait, oh, that!” as a people fell from the corner of the flower bed where the plaza was enclosed.

Falling on top of each other, Kouki, Ryuutaro, Suzu, Shizuku, and Kaori were there. Yue let out a sigh, appearing from behind. Tio appeared as well, floating an interesting smile. Apparently, they had all been hiding to watch the love affair between Shia from cover.

While getting up in a hurry, the group blushed. Suzu and Shizuku didn’t seem to be able to look directly at Shia and Hajime.

“To see, see… and everyone, how long have you been there….”

Shia was shaking, her face turning deep red like an explosion. The one who answer the question directed at Suzu turned out to be Hajime.

“It was since I was playing with Shia’s ears.”

“That’s not the beginning, everyone saw… yet you still say it like that…”

Shia hit Hajime repeatedly out of a sense of shame. Tears form in her eyes, but they had different meaning from a moment ago.

“Why do you want to hide it? It was good timing, and I didn’t want to miss the chance.”

“I did not want to miss it either… but even so…”

Shia’s spirit was dampened by Hajime’s blankly nice manner, further causing her to feel embarrassed, yet also happy.

As usual, Tio speaks up while floating a smile at such a Shia.

“Please, how was it? How was the taste of passion from master? Nn? Tell this mistress a little, how is Shia’s happy embarrassment?”

“Speak for yourself, pervert.”

Tio had put her arm around Shia and then suddenly she collapsed from a strike to the back of the head. Her finger twitched, moving into a point, and it was drawn to… “So it was Yue”. Yue had chucked a lump of ice mercilessly at her head unexpectedly.

“Yue…”

“…. Shia.”

Shia had glanced back at Yue, who was giving Tio a cold look as Tio pointed at her. After Yue dismissed Tio, she gave Shia a patient look. And then she smiled lightly, both of her hands opening.

“… Come.”

“…. Yue, now.”

Shia jumped into Yue’s chest. She clinged to Yue, with the size of a child but the stability of a woman. Yue patted her head with a look of kind affection while she hugged Shia in turn.

“… Yue, I… finally!”

“Nn... you worked hard. Good child.

“I love Yue, much the same!”

Shia echoed and then wept for joy. Shia was understood. However much Hajime thought someone to be important, it was ultimately up to Yue, whom was “just as himself”. Without worrying about Hajime, anyone else would be an “other” to Yue.

Yue treated Shia like a younger sister. She, the older sister, had watched her younger sister working hard. Moreover, the feelings of Hajime, which were stubborn, were finally accepted. It was a joyous event that Yue accepted sincerely, the value of Shia, and her right to her feelings...

“Is Yue not bothered?”

Unintentionally, Hajime muttered with a sullen face as Shia happily pressed her face against Yue’s breast. The younger sister who depends too much is reluctant. Like a good older sister does not baby, both people wore an expression of contentment that looked heartwarming overall.

“Tio, next will be our turns, let’s work hard.”

“Of course, I dream of the day that I am attacked by husband and worked hard.”

“... you can’t act like... Tio.”

Tio was in the state of collapsing while Kaori was talking while poking her. Tio revived with her eyes shining with hope. In the surroundings, Koaki, and Ryuutaro were looking at each other awkwardly, while Suzu looked at Shia and Hajime with an unreadable expression.

Do they need to encourage each other? Hajime opened a mouth with a troubled smile after hearing Kaori’s words.

“Please don’t tempt me so much...”

“!!” X2

Kaori and Tio look at Hajime with surprise, their eyes shining like stars. There was no other meaning to that... their dropped confidence recovering quickly.

Hajime had no intention to accept a partner who Yue didn't like at all, but he couldn't think Yue would value people that she constantly fought with. Of course, now that Shia has been accepted, there already is someone "besides Yue", and the declining complaint of their being only one isn't in common use.

The main points is that Hajime has recognized two people as important. To the degree which forgets itself when there are others.

Though Shia doesn't have a monopoly on his desire, it was still declared that Hajime accepted Shia and had a place in his heart. This meant things were not helpless for the others.

And at that time, Yue wore a pleased expression, Kaori and Tio's eyes were sparkly while Suzu watched on nervously. Everyone's eyes seemed to meet restlessly.

Hajime opened his mouth without knowing what was going through Suzu's mind, suppressing Kaori and Tio.

"And? What are a couple of peeping toms doing together? You're a bit early for supper. So what is your business?"

"Well, that... we met Yue accidently, and we..."

Shizuku gives a perplexed expression to Suzu. It seems like Suzu had noticed something unusual regarding Hajime. They seemed to have joined Yue accidently when she was looking for Hajime.

Hajime shot Suzu a dubious look. Suzu stepped forward toward such a Hajime.

"Nagumo-san, You see, take Suzu to the next large labyrinth, please!"

Because he thought Kouki would be the one making that kind of request, he was surprised when it was Suzu that was the first to beg.

"Suzu, that..."

"Kouki, this is about me. Therefore, this is an individual request for Suzu. Please don't butt in!"

After Suzu returned from the labyrinth, Kouki possessed a gloomy

atmosphere in response to her words, but with no strength to retaliate, he stopped. So it was not everyone, but Suzu specifically.

"Even if you don't accompany, I'll help bring us back to Japan anyway, and I said I can provide strengthening artifacts so that you can become strong, is that okay?"

"Yes, it is certainly so..., but, as for Nagumo, you won't lend a hand to Eri?"

"... Is it Nakamura...? Well, it is so. It's possible I'd shoot her on sight on instinct. She is one of the reasons Kaori was killed."

Suzu floats an embarrassed smile towards Hajime's bitter expression.

"It is so, However, I want to meet her and talk. Therefore, I need power. So I want to challenge the large labyrinth again. And no matter how the result becomes, when you come out, you'll probably end up in the territory of the demons."

"Suzu, that is..."

Shizuku grabbed Suzu's shoulders instinctively. No true friend would allow another to go into the demon territory alone.

However, Suzu was overcome with her strength of will, and there wasn't a single doubt in the look she gave to Shizuku as she held her shoulders.

On the other hand, she was convinced that if she traveled with Hajime, she'd have the chance to persuade Eri. If she accompanied Hajime to the source of the ice and snow labyrinth, they'd end up in the so-called demon king castle, which seems to be where Eri was held up.

Anyway, the ice and snow labyrinth is east of the south continent. The country Garland, the stronghold of the demons, was in the central southern continent.

Suzu knew that it was impossible for Hajime to be concerned about Eri, therefore Suzu understand it and knew Hajime might not wait for Eri to come around before leaving. Therefore, she'd talk to Eri until Hajime found out how they could return, and the best way to get that chance was

by accompanying them to the ice and snow labyrinth.

When Suzu turned her eyes back to Hajime from Shizuku, she asked earnestly with a tone that suggested desperation.

“And if, if it’s possible to collect Eri with that, if Eri wants forgiveness... in that case can you return us to Japan together. Please! Please, I beg you!”

“……”

Suzu’s screaming plea echoed, no one could say anything and everyone was silent.

Honestly, for Hajime, he remembered the look on Eri’s face. The spectacle when Kaori fell was recalled at this moment, and only murderous intent sprang with thoughts of Eri.

It was selfish that Suzu did things this way regarding Eri. However, the thought of cooperating felt like a small bone stuck in his throat. The girl named Eri Nakamura was already an enemy to Hajime.

However, even if it’s so, the request of Suzu was done with all of her heart. It was the eyes of the ascribable Kaori as to why Hajime possessed so much urge to kill Eri. Those eyes said something, conveying their own thoughts and meanings.

At that time, the long silent Kouki opened his mouth.

“Nagumo, I must also ask. I am the cause of what happened to Eri. Even though it might be unpleasant, I must speak with Eri. I can’t let Suzu go along to the demon territory. In it...”

Kouki had to strongly bit his lip, his fist grasped giving words with a slightly depressed atmosphere.

“As it is, it is not possible to end. Shizuku was also able to obtain the age of gods magic. I, uh... if we keep following, we’ll surely obtain power. If it is not such a mean place full of mental attacks, even I should be able to capture it. A large labyrinth where it goes this time, is a place even those demons can capture. Then, surely I can!”

“Kouki...”

To the appearance of Kouki, with his clapped trembling fist and dark atmosphere, Shizuku watched him with anxious eyes. Shizuku remembered the look of shock on Kouki when she was able to obtain the age of gods magic and he was not. Therefore, though he took care not to let it show, to a childhood friend he could not conceal his uneasiness.

“Oh certainly, I can’t let Suzu go alone. When it came to Eri, given Nagumo’s character, I have to ask too.”

“Ryuutaro too, Haa, well, it doesn’t fit to let Suzu go alone. Nagumo-san... whether it is possible to ask...”

It didn’t really matter if it was Kouki or Suzu, if a companion was going, Ryuutaro would cheerfully come too. Though her eyebrows were lowered to the character of eight from embarrassed towards such a Ryuutaro, Shizuku smiled like she was welcomed by Kouki now. Next, Shizuku bowed, seeming to apologize to Hajime.

Hajime turned his eyes to Suzu with a desperate look to the decision of Shizuku, nearly brought to tears. Kouki who had some returned feeling, Ryuutaro who was a muscle brain, Kouki and Kaori who worried about Shizuku, who worried about Suzu as a childhood friend, and finally he threw back a loud sigh.

And, Yue, and Shia, and Tio’s eyes, and they had opened their mouths and were nodding as if to say they understood the unpleasantness of having to make this request.

“... If I get even a little of hostility, I’ll shoot to kill...”

“Of course, Nagumo-san, thank you!”

Suzu, who managed to get consent, looked wiped out, her face bright with the expression of thanks. Shizuku also expressed thanks.

Because he’d need to invent concept magic that would prevent a re-summon in addition to the magic that would allow them to return to their world in the first place, Hajime was thinking that it would take a while to return anyway, even after getting the last piece of magic.

Whatever Suzu did would not be an obstacle for his return, so he didn’t

think there was any reason to not accept. However, the thought of Eri reforming and returning, Hajime did not think it was possible, and if she did get in his way, he would shoot her to death seriously.

Eventually, Hajime should take Suzu to the last large labyrinth and decided to permit it as it did not give him any problems in particular. With his own magic rising thanks to sublimation magic, it shouldn't create any problems.

Ignoring Suzu, who had a new sense of purpose, and the sweet feelings that came with it. Hajime smiled to himself. Yue and the other nestled close to such a Hajime.

"... Nn, a magnanimous Hajime is cute."

"Indeed, this is a Hajime to be proud of."

"After all, master is tsundere."

"Getting... hehe, thank you, Hajime."

From each, warmly treating Hajime, he glanced away. And Yue and the others laughed happily to see it.

This place of gods and demons was interesting, but it seemed like they were reaching the final stretch.

Credits

Translator: Japtem / Durasama / ElementalCobalt

Epub: Estevam / dotNOVEL